Indonesia history, Genocide 1965-1966, 40 years of silence, Bali bombings

40 YEARS OF SILENCE

In one of the largest unknown mass killings of the 20th century, an estimated 500,000 to 1,000,000 people were secretly and systematically killed in 1965-1966 in a bloody purge of suspected communists throughout Indonesia.

An ominous silence

The western response to the mass killings in Indonesia was enthusiastic - and instructive. Washington continued its assistance long after it was clear that mass killings were taking place and in the expectation that US aid would contribute to this end. Not a single official ever spoke against the slaughter.

"Our policy was silence", Deputy US National Security Advisor Walt Rostow later wrote in his correspondence with President Johnson. "A good thing, he said, 'in light of the wholesale killings that have accompanied the transition' from Sukarno to Suharto.

FULL ARTICLE BELOW

US Ambassador Green in his telegram to the State Department December 2, 1966

The chances of detection or subsequent revelation of our support in this instance
Anti-Communist purges, spurred by symbolic acts like the burning of a hammer and sickle, killed at least 500,000 people in Indonesia from 1965 to 1966.

W. Sutarto/Foto Antara, via Lontar Foundation

Veil of Silence Lifted in Indonesia
By SARA SCHONHARDT
Published: January 18, 2012

JAKARTA — As a solitary voice intoned a traditional Indonesian harvest song, dancers acted out the gathering of rice. Members of the audience joined in — most knew the words — until the song was overtaken by a vigorous hip-hop backbeat.
Women in military uniforms stormed the stage. A man in drag rapped while these “soldiers” assaulted the “farmers.” In the end, bodies of victims lay about. A sober audience broke into applause.

In 1967, President Sukarno, left, was replaced by General Suharto, right, who suppressed examinations of the events of that time.

The performance marked the release of “Breaking the Silence,” a collective memoir of 15 men and women who experienced the anti-Communist purges in 1965-66, an event that left at least 500,000 people dead and ushered in the 32-yea

It is one of the darkest but seldom-discussed periods in modern Indonesian history. But the new book is only part of an emerging examination of this long-suppressed subject. In November, there was the release of “Sang Penari,” a feature film that depicts the unfolding of a love story against the backdrop of that tumultuous time. The newsweekly Tempo recently published a special report on an army commander who had led efforts to wipe out the Indonesian Communist Party, or P.K.I.

This week, members of the Indonesian human rights commission, Komnas HAM, met with dozens of victims of the 1965-66 abuses to discuss a continuing investigation of the mass killings. The commission’s vice chairman, Nur Kholis, said Komnas HAM had collected testimonies from 350 victims but was struggling to find stronger evidence, in the form of documents and photographs, before submitting its report to the attorney general.

For decades the events of 1965-66 were shrouded in what Geoffrey Robinson, a historian at the University of California, Los Angeles, calls “enforced silence.” They began with a coup attempt against President Sukarno on Sept. 30, 1965, in which members of a group calling itself the Sept. 30 Movement, or G30S, killed six top generals. General Suharto, who helped put down the putsch and took control of the army, blamed the P.K.I. and led a campaign to purge the country of party members and other leftists. In the months that followed, security forces, local militias and vigilantes hunted down and killed thousands of people suspected of being Communists.

After Mr. Suharto became president in 1967, government censors routinely screened books, films and other media for mentions of the killings, said Mr. Robinson, whose book “The Dark Side of Paradise” focused on the post-coup massacres in Bali. Even in the 13 years since a popular uprising helped oust Suharto in 1998, the topic has largely been avoided in schools and public forums.

The official history in government-issued school textbooks describes a coup led by the “G30S/PKI” — linking the Sept. 30 Movement to the P.K.I. The subsequent mass killings are played down and cast as part of a patriotic campaign. The ban on Communist organizations enacted in 1966 remains in effect.

Recently, however, the purges have been the focus of academic seminars, personal memoirs and other forums.

In 2010, the Constitutional Court struck down a law that had been used to ban several books about the coup on the grounds of their “potential to disturb public order.” The attorney general can still ban some works for being provocative or misleading — and textbooks must still link the Sept. 30th Movement with the P.K.I. — but rights advocates and academics say the repeal has expanded the space for public discourse. r rule of Suharto and his “New Order.”
Since 2009, Ultimus, a publisher in Central Java Province, has released more than a dozen accounts by survivors. “These books are something new,” said Baskara Wardaya, co-founder of the Center for History and Political Ethics at Sanata Dharma University, which holds seminars, history-writing workshops and book discussions to address past rights abuses.

Publications like “Breaking the Silence” meet a rising demand by Indonesians eager to learn about their past, Mr. Baskara said. Still, Mr. Robinson said, decades of persecution of anyone associated with the banned P.K.I. have discouraged many survivors from speaking out.

Usman Hamid, an adviser for the International Center for Transitional Justice, a legal aid group that has been collecting survivors’ testimonies, said many senior military officers and former members of Islamic groups that are alleged to have taken part in the killings resist efforts to bring this part of Indonesian history into the spotlight.

The same holds true, Mr. Usman said, of some political parties that dominate Parliament, reflecting the influence still wielded by Golkar, which is the party founded by Mr. Suharto and has been part of the governing coalition since he was ousted. But Mr. Usman argued that uncovering the truth was necessary to hold political leaders formerly aligned with Mr. Suharto accountable. Putu Oka Sukanta, the editor of “Breaking the Silence,” said sharing accounts of the violence gave a voice to the victims and gave younger Indonesians access to a history they were not taught in school.

“It’s an expression of fighting to become human again,” said Mr. Putu, 72, who in 1966 was detained for 10 years without trial for belonging to the Institute of People’s Culture, a literary and social movement associated with the P.K.I.

Djoko Sri Moeljono, 73, was also among the hundreds of thousands of artists, academics and trade unionists jailed at that time as “leftists.” After his arrest in 1965, for being a trade union member and graduate of a Sukarno-supported metallurgy program in the Soviet Union, he spent six years in forced labor. He was then exiled to a remote island until 1978.

Now he is among the survivors sharing their memories with young Indonesians in discussion groups organized by universities and nongovernmental organizations.

The Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence, or Kontras, recently produced a graphic detailing the nearly two dozen statutes that still bar former political prisoners from employment in fields like education and the military.

To bring the purges into popular culture, dance troupes and puppet theaters have staged performances. The American filmmaker Robert Lemelson’s 2009 documentary “40 Years of Silence: An Indonesian Tragedy,” examines the impact of the killings on four families from Central Java and Bali.

In 2006, the independent National Commission on Violence Against Women sponsored a documentary in which high school students videotaped interviews with survivors.

Ratna Hapsari, a high school teacher and head of the Indonesian History Teachers Association, is leading an effort to revise the country’s curriculum. The process has not run smoothly.

In 2004, the Education Ministry removed passages linking the P.K.I. with the Sept. 30 Movement in textbooks. But in 2007, under pressure from the military and some leaders of Islamic-based parties in Parliament, the attorney general ordered the new books withdrawn for disturbing public order. In some places, they were publicly burned.

“The curriculum is very restricted,” said Ms. Ratna, who uses alternative texts in her classes and promotes outside learning through other resources, including the Internet.

Many older Indonesians see younger people’s interest in the purges as a positive sign of efforts to reclaim their country’s history. “We were taught that P.K.I. was really something evil,” said Lely Cabe, 30, a cultural officer at the Goethe Institute, the German cultural center, which hosted the event marking the release of “Breaking the Silence.”

“Now the younger generation is asking why.”

Taris Zakira Alam, 17, a great-niece of Itji Tarmizi, a painter who was accused of being a Communist sympathizer and spent much of his life in hiding, said it was important not only to discuss the purges but also to make amends to the victims. “As a young generation, we have to fight for this,” she said.
Indonesia history, Genocide 1965-1966, 40 years of silence, Bali bombings

500,000 - 1,000,000 People killed, thousands imprisoned

The world looked away, western media remained silent
The CIA even provided a list of names of people to be included.
Many innocent civilians became victim of this US supported untold tragedy.

US and Britain Overthrow of Democracy in Indonesia
Indonesia history, Genocide 1965-1966, 40 years of silence, Bali bombings.

The U.S. & Britain Overthrow Democracy in Indonesia

The CIA called it "one of the worst mass murders of the 20th century"

40 Years Of Silence Trailer

Indonesia, 1965

500,000 to 1,000,000 people are killed

Indonesia—1965

The Coup That Backfired

the anti-PKI massacres in
Indonesia rank as one of the worst mass murders of the
20th century, along with the Soviet purges of the 1930's,
the Nazi mass murders during the Second World War, and the
Maoist bloodbath of the early 1950's.

"We frankly do not know whether
the real figure is closer to 100,000 or 1,000,000 but believe it wiser to
err on the side of the lower estimates, especially when questioned by
the press."
Indonesia history, Genocide 1965-1966, 40 years of silence, bali bombings

US and Britain Overthrow of Democracy in Indonesia

Ten Years’ Military Terror in Indonesia

"I probably have a lot of blood on my hands, but that's not all bad. There's a time when you have to strike hard at a decisive moment." So said Robert J. Martens, formerly a political officer in the U.S. embassy in Indonesia, as he described to reporter Kathy Kadane how U.S. diplomats and CIA officers provided up to 5,000 names to Indonesian army death squads in 1965, and checked them off as they were killed or captured. The death toll reached a half million or so. Kadane's article was reprinted in the San Francisco Examiner (1990-05-20) and the Washington Post (1990-05-21), but soon the New York Times checked in with a damage control effort by Michael Wines (1990-07-12), which proclaimed the end of the story.

March 29, 2011

Libya, Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect

USIP’s Lawrence Woocher reacts to President Obama’s speech on Libya, genocide prevention and the responsibility to protect.

Does the U.S. have a national interest to prevent committing those atrocities or fails to protect its own citizens?

What messages from President Obama's speech last night intersect with your work on mass atrocity prevention?

FULL ARTICLE

Does the U.S. have a national interest to prevent atrocities from happening in Libya?
I would argue that it is in the U.S. national interest to prevent mass atrocities from happening anywhere, including in Libya. This interest is derived partly from the intersection of atrocities with political instability, massive humanitarian demands, and other ills that the United States has an interest in preventing.

And, perhaps more importantly, engaging seriously in preventing atrocities signals powerfully to the world that U.S. rhetorical commitments to human rights and liberty are not empty. This enhances America’s "soft power," helping to foster an international environment that is conducive to promoting American goals.

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO the US role in the Indonesia genocide 1965-66?

Editor

The slaughters in Indonesia, 1965-66

By Mark Curtis
An edited extract from Web of Deceit: Britain’s real Role in the World

“I have never concealed from you my belief that a little shooting in Indonesia would be an essential preliminary to effective change.” (Britain’s ambassador to Indonesia, letter to the Foreign Office, 1965)

The formerly secret British files, together with recently declassified US files, reveal an astonishing story. Although the Foreign Office is keeping many of the files secret until 2007, a clear picture still emerges of British and US support for one of the postwar world’s worst bloodbaths – what US officials at the time called a “reign of terror” and British officials “ruthless terror”.

In his 600-page long autobiography, Denis Healey, then Britain’s Defence Minister, failed to mention at all Suharto’s brutal seizure of power, let alone Britain’s role. It is not hard to see why.

The killings in Indonesia started when a group of army officers loyal to President Sukarno assassinated several generals on 30 September 1965. They believed the generals were about to stage a coup to overthrow Sukarno. The instability, however, provided other anti-Sukarno generals, led by General Suharto, with an excuse for the army to move against a powerful and popular political faction with mass support, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). It did so brutally: in a few months hundreds of thousands of PKI members and ordinary people were killed and the PKI destroyed. Suharto emerged as leader and instituted a brutal regime that lasted until 1998.

Close relations between the US and British embassies in Jakarta are indicated in the declassified files and point to a
somewhat coordinated joint operation in 1965. These files show five ways in which the Labour government under Harold Wilson together with the Democratic government under Lyndon Johnson were complicit in this slaughter.

First, the British wanted the army to act and encouraged it. “I have never concealed from you my belief that a little shooting in Indonesia would be an essential preliminary to effective change”, the ambassador in Jakarta, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, informed the Foreign Office on 5 October. The following day the Foreign Office stated that “the crucial question still remains whether the Generals will pluck up enough courage to take decisive action against the PKI”. Later it noted that “we must surely prefer an Army to a Communist regime” and declared: “It seems pretty clear that the Generals are going to need all the help they can get and accept without being tagged as hopelessly pro-Western, if they are going to be able to gain ascendency over the Communists. In the short run, and while the present confusion continues, we can hardly go wrong by tacitly backing the Generals”. British policy was “to encourage the emergence of a General’s regime”, one intelligence official later explained.

US officials similarly expressed their hope of “army at long last to act effectively against Communists” [sic]. “We are, as always, sympathetic to army’s desire to eliminate communist influence” and “it is important to assure the army of our full support of its efforts to crush the PKI”.

US and British officials had clear knowledge of the killings. US Ambassador Marshall Green noted three weeks after the attempted coup, and with the killings having begun, that: “Army has... been working hard at destroying PKI and I, for one, have increasing respect for its determination and organisation in carrying out this crucial assignment”. Green noted in the same despatch the “execution of PKI cadres”, putting the figure at “several hundred of them” in “Djakarta area alone”[sic]. On 1 November, Green informed the State Department of the army’s “moving relentlessly to exterminate the PKI as far as that is possible to do”. Three days later he noted that “Embassy and USG generally sympathetic with and admiring of what army doing” [sic]. Four days after this the US Embassy reported that the army “has continued systematic drive to destroy PKI in northern Sumatra with wholesale killings reported”.

A British official reported on 25 November that “PKI men and women are being executed in very large numbers”. Some victims “are given a knife and invited to kill themselves. Most refuse and are told to turn around and are shot in the back”. One executioner considered it “his duty to exterminate what he called ‘less than animals’”. A British official wrote to the Ambassador on 16 December, saying: “You – like me – may have been somewhat surprised to see estimates by the American embassy that well over 100,000 people have been killed in the troubles since 1 October. I am, however, reader to accept such figures after [receiving] some horrifying details of the purges that have been taking place... The local army commander... has a list of PKI members in five categories. He has been given orders to kill those in the first three categories... A woman of 78... was taken away one night by a village execution squad... Half a dozen heads were neatly arranged on the parapet of a small bridge”.

The US Consulate in Medan was reporting that “much indiscriminate killing is taking place”: “Something like a reign of terror against PKI is taking place. This terror is not discriminating very carefully between PKI leaders and ordinary PKI members with no ideological bond to the party”. By mid December the State Department noted approvingly that “Indonesian military leaders’ campaign to destroy PKI is moving fairly swiftly and smoothly”. By 14 February 1966 Ambassador Green could note that “the PKI has been destroyed as an effective political force for some time to come” and that “the Communists...have been decimated by wholesale massacre”.

The British files show that by February 1966 the British ambassador was estimating 400,000 dead – but even this was described by the Swedish ambassador as a “gross under-estimate”. By March one British official wondered “how much of it [the PKI] is left, after six months of killing” and believed that over 200,000 had been killed in Sumatra alone – in a report called “The liquidation of the Indonesian Communist Party in Sumatra”. By April, the US Embassy stated that “we frankly do not know whether the real figure is closer to 100,000 or 1,000,000 but believe it wiser to err on the side of the lower estimates, especially when questioned by the press”.

Summarising the events of 1965 the British Consul in Medan said: “Posing as saviours of the nation from a communist terror, [the army] unleashed a ruthless terror of their own, the scars of which will take many years to heal.” Another British memo referred to “an operation carried out on a very large scale and often with appalling savagery”. Another simply referred to the “bloodbath”.

British and US officials totally supported these massacres, the files show. I could find no reference to any concern about the extent of killing at all – other than constant encouragement for the army to continue. As the files above indicate, there is no question that British and US officials knew exactly what they were supporting. One British official noted, referring to 10,005 people arrested by the army: “I hope they do not throw the 10,005 into the sea..., otherwise it will cause quite a shipping hazard”.

It was not only PKI activists who were the targets of this terror. As the British files show, many of the victims were the
"merest rank and file" of the PKI who were “often no more than bewildered peasants who give the wrong answer on a
dark night to bloodthirsty hooligans bent on violence”, with the connivance of the army.

Britain connived even more closely with those conducting the slaughter. By 1965, Britain had deployed tens of thousands
of troops in Borneo, to defend its former colony of Malaya against Indonesian encroachments following territorial claims by
Jakarta – known as the “confrontation”. British planners secretly noted that they “did not want to distract the Indonesian
army by getting them engaged in fighting in Borneo and so discourage them from the attempts which they now seem to
be making to deal with the PKI”.

The US was worried that Britain might take advantage of the instability in Indonesia to launch an offensive from
Singapore “to stab the good generals in the back”, as Ambassador Gilchrist described the US fear. So the British
Ambassador proposed reassuring those Indonesians who were ordering mass slaughter, saying that “we should get word
to the Generals that we shall not attack them whilst they are chasing the PKI”. The British intelligence chief in Singapore
agreed, believing this “might ensure that the army is not detracted [sic] from what we consider to be a necessary task”.
In October the British passed to the Generals, through a US contact, “a carefully phrased oral message about not biting
the Generals in the back for the present”.

The US files confirm that the message from the US, conveyed on 14 October, read: “First, we wish to assure you that we
have no intention of interfering Indonesian internal affairs directly or indirectly. Second, we have good reason to believe
that none of our allies intend to initiate any offensive action against Indonesia” [sic].

The message was greatly welcomed by the Indonesian army: an aide to the Defence Minister noted that “this was just
what was needed by way of assurances that we (the army) weren’t going to be hit from all angles as we moved to
straighten things out here”.

According to former BBC correspondent Roland Challis, the counsellor at the British embassy, (now Sir) James Murray,
was authorised to tell Suharto that in the event of Indonesian troops being transferred from the confrontation area to
Java, British forces would not take military advantage. Indeed, in his book, Challis notes a report in an Indonesian
newspaper in 1980 that Britain even helped an Indonesian colonel transport an infantry brigade on confrontation duty
back to Jakarta. “Flying the Panamanian flag, she sailed safely down the heavily-patrolled Malacca Strait – escorted by
two British warships”, Challis notes.

The third means of support was propaganda operations, mainly involving the distribution of false anti-Sukarno messages
and stories through the media. This was organised from Britain’s MI6 Phoenix Park intelligence base in Singapore. The
head of these operations, Norman Reddaway, told the BBC’s Southeast Asia correspondent to “do anything you can think
of to get rid of Sukarno”. On 5 October Reddaway reported to the Foreign Office in London that: “We should not miss the
present opportunity to use the situation to our advantage… I recommend that we should have no hesitation in doing what
we can surreptitiously to blacken the PKI in the eyes of the army and the people of Indonesia”.

The Foreign Office replied: “We certainly do not exclude any unattributable propaganda or psywar [psychological warfare]
activities which would contribute to weakening the PKI permanently. We therefore agree with the [above]
recommendation… Suitable propaganda themes might be… Chinese interference in particular arms shipments; PKI
subverting Indonesia as agents of foreign communists”. It continued: “We want to act quickly while the Indonesians are
still off balance but treatment will need to be subtle… Please let us know of any suggestions you may have on these lines
where we could be helpful at this end”.

On 9 October the intelligence agent confirmed that “we have made arrangements for distribution of certain unattributable
material based on the general guidance” in the Foreign Office memo. This involved “promoting and coordinating publicity”
critical of the Sukarno government to “news agencies, newspapers and radio”. “The impact has been considerable”, one
file notes. British propaganda covered in various newspapers included fabrications of nest-eggs accumulated abroad by
Sukarno’s ministers and PKI preparations for a coup by carving up Jakarta into districts to engage in systematic slaughter
(forerunners of current modern propaganda on Iraq).

The fourth method of support was a “hit list” of targets supplied by the US to the Indonesian army. As the journalist
Kathy Kadane has revealed, as many as 5,000 names of provincial, city and other local PKI committee members and
leaders of the mass organisations of the PKI, such as the national labour federation, women’s and youth groups, were
passed on the Generals, many of whom were subsequently killed. “It really was a big help to the army” noted Robert
Martens, a former official in the US embassy. “They probably killed a lot of people and I probably have a lot of blood on
my hands, but that’s not all bad. There’s a time when you have to strike hard at a decisive moment”.

The declassified US files do not provide many further details about this hit list, although they do further confirm it. One list
of names, for example, was passed to the Indonesians in December 1965 and “is apparently being used by Indonesian
security authorities who seem to lack even the simplest overt information on PKI leadership at the time”. Also, “lists of other officials in the PKI affiliates, Partindo and Baperki were also provided to GOI [Government of Indonesia] officials at their request”.

The final means of support was provision of arms – although this remains the murkiest area to uncover. Past US support to the Indonesian military “should have established clearly in minds Army leaders that US stands behind them if they should need help [sic]”, the State Department noted. US strategy was to “avoid overt involvement in the power struggle but… indicate, clearly but covertly, to key Army officers our desire to assist where we can.”

The first US supplies to the Indonesian army were radios “to help in internal security” and to aid the Generals “in their task of overcoming the Communists”, as British Ambassador Gilchrist pointed out. “I see no reason to object or complain”, he added. The US historian Gabriel Kolko has shown that in early November 1965 the US received a request from the Generals to “arm Moslem and nationalist youths…for use against the PKI”. The recently published files confirm this approach from the Indonesians. On 1 November Ambassador Green cabled Washington that: “As to the provision of small arms I would be leery about telling army we are in position to provide same, although we should act, not close our minds to this possibility… We could explore availability of small arms stocks, preferable of non-US origin, which could be obtained without any overt US government involvement. We might also examine channels through which we could, if necessary, provide covert assistance to army for purchase of weapons”.

A CIA memo of 9 November stated that the US should avoid being “too hesitant about the propriety of extending such assistance provided we can do so covertly, in a manner which will not embarrass them or embarrass our government”. It then noted that mechanisms exist or can be created to deliver “any of the types of the materiel requested to date in reasonable quantities”. One line of text is then not declassified before the memo notes: “The same can be said of purchasers and transfer agents for such items as small arms, medicine and other items requested.” The memo goes on to note that “we do not propose that the Indonesian army be furnished such equipment at this time”. However, “if the Army leaders justify their needs in detail…it is likely that at least will help ensure their success and provide the basis for future collaboration with the US”. “The means for covert implementation” of the delivery of arms “are within our capabilities”.

In response to Indonesia’s request for arms, Kolko has shown that the US promised to provide such covert aid, and dubbed them “medicines”. They were approved in a meeting in Washington on 4 December. The declassified files state that “the Army really needed the medicines” and that the US was keen to indicate “approval in a practical way of the actions of the Indonesian army”. The extent of arms provided is not revealed in the files but the amount “the medicines would cost was a mere pittance compared with the advantages that might accrue to the US as a result of ‘getting in on the ground floor’”, one file reads.

The British knew of these arms supplies and it is likely they also approved them. Britain was initially reluctant to see US arms go to the Generals for fear that they might be used by Indonesia in the “confrontation”. The British files show that the US State Department had “undertaken to consult with us before they do anything to support the Generals”. It is possible that the US reneged on this commitment; however, in earlier discussions about this possibility, a British official at the embassy in Washington noted that “I do not think that is very likely”.

The threat of independent development

The struggle between the army and the PKI was “a struggle basically for the commanding heights of the Indonesian economy”, British officials noted. At stake was using the resources of Indonesia for the primary benefit of its people or for businesses, including Western companies.

British and US planners supported the slaughter to promote interests deemed more important than people’s lives. London wanted to see a change in regime in Jakarta to bring an end to the “confrontation” with Malaya. But commercial interests were just as important. Southeast Asia was “a major producer of some essential commodities” such as rubber, copra and chromium ore; “the defence of the sources of these products and their denial to a possible enemy are major interests to the Western powers”, the Foreign Office noted. This was a fancy way of saying that the resources will continue to be exploited by Western business. Indonesia was also strategically located at a nexus of important trading routes.

British Foreign Secretary Michel Stewart wrote in the middle of the slaughter: “It is only the economic chaos of Indonesia which prevents that country from offering great potential opportunities to British exporters. If there is going to be a deal in Indonesia, as I hope one day there may be, I think we ought to take an active part and try to secure a slice of the cake ourselves”.

Similarly, one Foreign Office noted that Indonesia was in a “state of economic chaos but is potentially rich”. “American exporters, like their British counterparts, presumably see in Indonesia a potentially rich market once the economy has been brought under control".
For the US, Under Secretary of State George Ball had noted that Indonesia “may be more important to us than South V-
N [Vietnam]”, against which the US was at the same time massively stepping up its assault. “At stake” in Indonesia, one
US memo read, “are 100 million people, vast potential resources and a strategically important chain of islands”. US
priorities were virtually identical in Vietnam and Indonesia: to prevent the consolidation of an independent nationalist
regime that threatened Western interests and that could be a successful development model for others.

President Sukarno clearly had the wrong economic priorities. In 1964, British-owned commercial interests had been
placed under Indonesian management and control. However, under the Suharto regime, the British Foreign Secretary told
one Indonesian army General that “we are…glad that your government has decided to hand back the control of British
estates to their original owners”.

The US Ambassador in Malaysia cabled Washington a year before the October 1965 events in Indonesia saying that
“our difficulties with Indonesia stem basically from deliberate, positive GOI [Government of Indonesia] strategy of seeking
to push Britain and the US out of Southeast Asia”. George Ball noted in March 1965 that “our relations with Indonesia
are on the verge of falling apart”. “Not only has the management of the American rubber plants been taken over, but
there are dangers of an imminent seizure of the American oil companies”.

According to a US report for President Johnson: “The government occupies a dominant position in basic industry, public
utilities, internal transportation and communication… It is probable that private ownership will disappear and may be
succeeded by some form of production-profit-sharing contract arrangements to be applied to all foreign investment”.

Overall, “the avowed Indonesian objective is ‘to stand on their own feet’ in developing their economy, free from foreign,
especially Western, influence”. This was – is – a serious danger that needed to be removed. Third World countries are to
develop under overall Western control, not by or for themselves, a truism about US and British foreign policy revealed
time and again in the declassified files.

It is customary in the propaganda system to excuse past horrible British and US policies by referring to the Cold War. In
Indonesia, the main threat was indigenous nationalism. The British feared “the resurgence of Communist and radical
nationalism”. One US memo says of future PKI policy: “It is likely that PKI foreign policy decisions, like those of Sukarno,
would stress Indonesian national interests above those of Peking, Moscow or international communism in general”. The
real danger was that Indonesia would be too successful, a constant US fear well documented by Kolko and Noam
Chomsky in policy towards numerous other countries. A Special National Intelligence Estimate of 1 September 1965
referred to the PKI’s moving “to energize and unite the Indonesian nation” and stated that “if these efforts succeeded,
Indonesia would provide a powerful example for the underdeveloped world and hence a credit to communism and a
setback for Western prestige”. One critical area was the landlessness of the poor peasants – the source of the grinding
poverty of most Indonesians – and land reform more generally, the key political issue in rural areas and the smaller
cities. The PKI was recognised by British and US officials as the champion of the landless and poor in Indonesia.

Britain was keen to establish good relations with Suharto, that were to remain for thirty years. A year after the begin-
ing of the slaughter, the Foreign Office noted that “it was very necessary to demonstrate to the Indonesians that we regarded
our relations with them as rapidly returning to normal”. Britain was keen to establish “normal trade” and provide aid, and
to express its “goodwill and confidence” in the new regime. British officials spoke to the new Foreign Minister, Adam
Malik, of the “new relationship which we hope will develop between our two countries”. A Foreign Office brief for the
Cabinet said that Britain “shall do all we can to restore good relations with Indonesia and help her resume her rightful
place in the world community”.

There is no mention in any of the files – that I could find – of the morality of engaging with the new regime. The
slaughter was simply an irrelevance. Michael Stewart recalled in his autobiography that he visited Indonesia a year after
the killings and was able to “reach a good understanding with the Foreign Minister, Adam Malik”, a “remarkable man”
who was “evidently resolved to keep his country at peace”. Suharto’s regime is “like Sukarno’s, harsh and tyrannical; but
it is not aggressive”, Stewart stated. Malik later acted as a primary apologist for Indonesian atrocities in East Timor. In
1977, for example, he was reported as saying: “50,000 or 80,000 people might have been killed during the war in East
Timor…It was war…Then what is the big fuss?”.

A combination of Western advice, aid and investment helped transform the Indonesian economy into one that, although
retaining some nationalist orientation, provided substantial opportunities and profits for Western investors. President
Suharto’s increasingly corrupt authoritarian regime kept economic order. Japan and the United States, working through
consortia and the multilateral banks, used aid as a lever to rewrite Indonesia's basic economic legislation. Indonesia
rejoined the IMF and the World Bank and issued an investment law making it a haven for foreign investors. The
consequence was that landlessness increased as land ownership became more concentrated; the peasants were afraid
to organise, and the prospects of fundamental economic changes preferential to the poor were successfully eradicated.
Western businesses moved in. By the mid-1970s, a British CBI report noted that Indonesia presented “enormous potential for the foreign investor”. The press reported that the country enjoyed a “favourable political climate” and the “encouragement of foreign investment by the country’s authorities”. RTZ, BP, British Gas and Britoil were some of the companies that took taken advantage.

With Suharto gone after May 1998, British ministers were able to talk frankly of the regime they had supported. It could now be admitted that under Suharto there was “severe political repression”, the “concentration of economic and political power in a few, extremely corrupt hands”, and the “involvement of the security forces in every tier of social and political life”, for example. All these things had been miraculously discovered.

IS PROTECTING CIVILIANS IN DISASTERS AND CONFLICTS
A SELECTIVE WESTERN PREROGATIVE???

Confidential documents reveal the secrets of 1965
Brad Simpson

Brad Simpson, Assistant Professor of History and International Studies at Princeton University and author of “Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and US-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968”, said the US and British governments did “everything in their power” to ensure that the Indonesian army would carry out the mass killing

Editor’s Note:

The United States, which prides itself on being a foreighner for humanitarian rights, for intervening in expected slaughters of civilians by dictators in other countries, really outdid itself here in Indonesia 1965-66.

It helped replacing Indonesia’s First President, Sukarno, with a proven dictator, Suharto, who was responsible for the slaughter of an estimated 500,000-one million civilians, suspected communists. The CIA even provided
Indonesia history, Genocide 1965-1966, 40 years of silence, Bali bombings

a list of names of people to be included. Many innocent civilians became victim of this US supported untold tragedy.

How can the US proclaim itself a fighter for humanitarian rights if they themselves infringe on people's rights and support mass muder of people without fair trial? How do they select where to act and where to abstain from intervention? What warrants intervention and what warrants inaction? What are the criteria? An easy guess: Friends or Foes.

This is an integral part of Indonesian History. The US played a role in making this a Black Page in History, a role silenced for more than 40 years, a role that cannot be forgotten and will always reflect on the two country's relations.

Is this just a shield or excuse to allow willful intervention in a country's sovereignty if the government is considered unfriendly to the US? Must every one abide to their dictations? Let the politicians explain. The 1965 genocide in Indonesia speaks for itself.

Some sample impressions of the world as regards proclaimed US leadership in foreign relations

**In Sukarno's words:**

I am often asked about my alleged anti-Americanism. Over the years I have desperately wanted to be America's friend, but she wouldn't let me. She repeatedly mistakes foreign aid for friendship

(quoted from "Sukarno: An Autobiography" by Cindy Adams page 295):

**JFK statement referencing USA's continuous attempts to overthrow President Sukarno**

They finally succeeded in 1965 and supported his successor's genocide. A superb example of selective willful application of proclaimed adherence to humanitarian principles.
President Megawati not bowing to US demand when pressured by US Ambassador Ralph Boyce to refute US involvement in the 2002 Bali Bombings, did not issue an official retraction but instead called the US "a superpower that forced the rest of the world to go along with it… We see how ambition to conquer other nations has led to a situation where there is no more peace unless the whole world is complying with the will of the one with the power and strength."

Brad Simpson, Assistant Professor of History and International Studies at Princeton University and author of "Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and US-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968", said the US and British governments did "everything in their power" to ensure that the Indonesian army would carry out the mass killings. His conclusion:

The catastrophes that befell Indonesia in the late 20th century should serve as a warning as to what can happen again if people continue to think that the end justifies the means.

Where were the usually outspoken western media, the proclaimed forefighters of Truth and Justice? They seem to be selective and not objective.

The Indonesian Massacres and the CIA
by Ralph McGehee
Covert Action Quarterly, Fall 1990

Yesterday's Fake News, Today's Fake History
The CIA desperately wants to conceal evidence of its role in the massacre, which it admits
was one of the century's worst. The U.S. media seem equally determined to protect the American image from consequences of covert operations.

FULL ARTICLE BELOW.

**No Objectivity and Balance in Media Reporting**

John McBeth, Longtime Jakarta-Based Journalist in his book "Forty Years Covering Asia"

..... most of the cable news networks have forsaken objectivity entirely and seem to favor entertainment over real news, ideology over reality.

Most Internet sites are only interested in comment, unencumbered by rules about verification and sourcing. Bloggers, who give new meaning to the expression 'talk is cheap,' would have nothing to talk about if it was not for the costly enterprise of news-gathering and investigative reporting.

**Objectivity and balance**, the two factors I feel are more important than anything in my trade, have undergone a serious deterioration in recent years. **Too many news stories are opinionated or carry an obvious bias**

These observations are based on the extensively available published reports and analyses on the internet.

Comments to

(Editor)

**In one of the largest unknown mass killings of the 20th century, an estimated 500,000 to 1,000,000 people were secretly and systematically killed in 1965-1966, when General Suharto began a bloody purge of suspected communists throughout Indonesia. Under his authoritarian rule, any discussion, recognition or memorialising of the mass killings that differed from the Suharto’s official state narrative was quickly suppressed.**

Jeremy Kuzmarov:
Review of Bradley R. Simpson's

Unbeknownst to most Americans, in 1965, following a coup by General Suharto, the Indonesian military massacred upwards of 800,000 people and imprisoned an estimated million more in an attempt to liquidate the communist PKI party. The United States government gave both moral encouragement and logistical support to the mass killings, including the provision of weaponry and “lists” of suspected PKI members to be targeted for assassination. Mainstream newspapers like the New York Times wrote laudatory pieces in praise of the genocidal Suharto government, referring to it as a “gleaming light in Asia” because of its fervent anti-communism and openness towards foreign investment and free-trade. C.L Sulzberger added, in the crude racism of the day, that “the killing had attained a volume impressive even in violent Asia, where life is cheap.”

Bradley R. Simpson’s outstanding new book, Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S. Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968, provides chilling new evidence of American complicity with what the CIA itself referred to as “the worst mass killings” since the era of Hitler and Stalin. He comments that the U.S. “viewed the wholesale annihilation of the PKI and its civilian backers as an indispensable prerequisite to Indonesia’s reintegration into the global political economy and the ascendance of a military modernizing regime.”

Building on George and Audrey Kahin’s invaluable study, Subversion as Foreign Policy: The Secret Eisenhower-Dulles Debacle in Indonesia, Simpson details how U.S. support for the 1965 coup and genocide was part of a much longer destabilization campaign directed against Achmed Sukarno; Indonesia’s first post-independence president whom Washington opposed because of his socialist leanings and leadership of the non-aligned movement of Third World states. Simpson also explores in considerable depth the ideology of American foreign policy-elites and the symbiotic relationship they developed with U.S. trained Indonesian economists who served as key advisers to the Suharto government promoting a mix of privatization, authoritarian development and free-market capitalism. These policies served as a precursor to the structural adjustment paradigm promoted by the World Bank during the 1980s and 1990s, and yielded similarly deleterious effects for the working-class and poor. Significantly, they could only be imposed by fiat, rather than popular consent.

Challenging the romanticized views of the Kennedy administration pervading popular culture and the Obama presidential campaign, one of Simpson’s major contributions is to show the continuity from Eisenhower on in seeking to illegally subvert Indonesian politics and undermine Sukarno. Through the CIA, the Eisenhower administration had funneled arms to dissident generals mounting a series of regional rebellions. Its cover was blown when an Air America pilot, Allen Pope, was captured after shelling an Indonesian village. During the Kennedy era, the special group on counter-insurgency (CI), headed by Robert Kennedy, was particularly influential in trying to build up the paramilitary capabilities of the Indonesian police, who were pro-western in their orientation and seen as a potential counterweight to the power of the military. The CIA further pressed for covert actions – laying the groundwork for the 1965 military coup, which the Johnson administration supported. These policies resulted in part from a growing infatuation with the notion of military modernization developed by prominent intellectuals of the period and RAND Corporation analysts. They believed that through the imposition of order and stability, the military could be the most effective instrument in serving U.S. Cold War interests and promoting economic development and growth. This idea lay behind the U.S. alliance with Suharto, and also shaped its involvement in an assortment of right-wing coups in Latin America and elsewhere during the 1960s and early 1970s.

Going beyond previous scholarship on modernization and the Kennedy administration, which focuses solely on ideology, Simpson advances a political economy analysis, showing how intellectual ideas of
modernization were coterminous with the promotion of Western economic interests. Indonesia was particularly valued by policy-elites as a result of its mineral and oil wealth and provided a bonanza to oil corporations like Caltex following the 1965 coup. This was true of many other firms, including General Motors and Morris and Knudsen (precursor to Halliburton) which had been threatened by Sukarno’s movement towards nationalization and thus feared the strength of the PKI. General Suharto was ultimately far more amenable to U.S. interests from an ideological and economic vantage point, resulting in his being embraced in spite of his atrocious human rights record. The long shadow of McCarthyism, furthermore, made his anti-communist pogroms highly appealing to many in the State and Defense Departments who expressed no outspoken criticism of, or dissent against the rising toll of bloodshed. As a State Department staffer once commented, “No one cared as long as they were communists that were being butchered.”

Simpson’s last chapter focuses on the title of his book – the economists who worked as a technocratic elite under Suharto in ushering in the new order. He traces how they were influenced by their training at Berkeley and other Ivy League institutions in free-market capitalist ideals and aimed to promote westernization and modernization through the opening of the country to foreign investors. As Simpson makes clear, their influence on policy stemmed not from any popular consent but rather the violence and repression of grassroots dissent upon which Suharto’s power was based. In an arrogant manner they believed that their specialized technical knowledge of economic theory made them supremely qualified to dictate public policy. Ultimately, however, while Indonesia did experience striking growth levels in its GDP under Suharto, a large majority of the population remained mired in poverty and destitution, lacking in basic social services. Their political freedoms, meanwhile, had long since eroded.

On the whole, as one can see through Simpson’s book, Indonesia provides an important case study for U.S. foreign policy in the Cold War. It demonstrates how ideological and economic objectives came to trump human rights, and how Washington was able to use foreign aid and training programs to effectively promote its interests through native clients who were swayed by Western ideals and had their own power interests at stake. Moreover, it reveals the cold-hearted calculations of American policy-makers who were willing to support murderous violence and genocide in order to advance its objectives.

Simpson’s book is highly significant in one other respect: it shows the perils of authoritarian models of economic development and the fallaciousness of the military modernization theories promoted by Kennedy-era intellectuals, which continue to hold some credence among foreign policy elites today.

*The catastrophes that befell Indonesia in the late 20th century should serve as a warning as to what can happen again if people continue to think that the end justifies the means.*

US Backed "Efficacious Terror" in 1965 Indonesian Coup/Genocide

Saturday, July 18 2009 @ 11:32 PM UTC

The United States and British governments, supported by Australia, were deeply complicit in the murder of more than half a million alleged communist sympathisers in the wake of the 1965 Indonesian coup, a prominent historian told an international conference in Singapore last month.

**Historian says US backed “efficacious terror” in 1965 Indonesian massacre**
By John Braddock
WSWS
7 July 2009

The United States and British governments, supported by Australia, were deeply complicit in the murder of more than half a million alleged communist sympathisers in the wake of the 1965 Indonesian coup, a prominent historian told an international conference in Singapore last month.

Brad Simpson, Assistant Professor of History and International Studies at Princeton University and author of “Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and US-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968”, said the US and British governments did “everything in their power” to ensure that the Indonesian army would carry out the mass killings.

The conference, entitled “The 1965-1966 Indonesian Killings Revisited”, held at the National University of Singapore from June 17-19, was a rare forum on the subject. The event, co-hosted by the university, the Asia Research Institute and the Australian Research Council, involved some 30 scholars from around the
Within Indonesia, the history of the political slaughter carried out between October and December 1965 has been suppressed for decades. The massacre of at least 500,000 people, the jailing without trial of about a million others and the widespread use of torture and rape, ranks as one of the great crimes of the twentieth century.

Despite the official secrecy surrounding the events, the consequences still reverberate within the country's social and political life. The current ruling elite can trace its history back to the 1965 events. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, for instance, is a former general while his father-in-law, Sarwo Edhie Wibowo, was an Australian-trained officer who led the killings in Central Java.

No such conference could be held in Indonesia and most of the participants were non-Indonesian. Since the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, tentative attempts to examine the coup have foundered on opposition from the military. A truth and reconciliation commission set up by parliament never got off the ground and the Constitutional Court has now ruled it unlawful. School textbooks reflect the military propaganda, which maintains that the killings were part of a “patriotic campaign” against communism. Marxism remains officially proscribed.

The Age interviewed two elderly survivors of the massacre, Sumini and Anwar Umar, who maintain a weekly vigil across the road from the president’s offices in Jakarta. Sumini, a former kindergarten teacher was arrested, tortured and imprisoned for ten years for being a member of Gerwani, a women’s movement linked with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Anwar, who had been secretary-general of a civil servants union, spent 12 years in prison and was also tortured. Even after their eventual release, their identity papers were marked to show they were former political prisoners and they were unable to work.

The coup followed a period of sustained political upheaval following World War II. The Indonesian masses were determined to throw off the desperate poverty and oppression that had been imposed for over 350 years, firstly by the Dutch, then the Japanese. During the struggles for independence, hundreds of thousands of workers had joined the Stalinist PKI, erroneously believing that it still represented the revolutionary socialist traditions of the Bolshevik revolution.

Following independence, President Sukarno precariously balanced between the various demands of the ruling elites and widespread social unrest among workers and the poor. Posturing as an “anti-imperialist” and a “man of the people”, Sukarno increasingly relied on the PKI to contain the demands of masses.

In 1957, foreign domination over the economy was shaken by a massive eruption of workers and peasants who seized or occupied factories, plantations, banks and ships. Sukarno relied on the PKI to ensure that the property was handed over to the army, which was sent to suppress the movement. Following further unrest in 1962, and again in early 1965, Sukarno brought the army commanders and PKI leadership into his cabinet.

In the midst of the Cold War, as it became involved in Vietnam, Washington was increasingly concerned at the PKI’s size and influence. In 1965, however, as preparations for a military coup became evident, the PKI continued to subordinate the masses to Sukarno, in line with the reactionary Stalinist theory of a “two-stage” revolution, and insisted on the “peaceful road” to socialism, promoting deadly illusions in the armed forces.

Even as Sukarno banned all strikes, the PKI blocked any independent movement of the working class, thereby encouraging the military to act with the backing of the US and its allies.

According Simpson’s paper, “Capitalists come back! The Political Economy of the 1965-1966 Killings,” there was “a lot of evidence that the US was engaged in covert operations ... to provoke a clash between the army and the PKI ... to wipe them out.” Even at the height of the massacre, and while harboring deep reservations about the military’s willingness to enact the sweeping political and economic changes Washington deemed necessary, US officials and their regional allies were “weighing the conditions under which they would resume assistance to Jakarta”.

In an interview with the Darwin-based Southeast Asian Times on June 7, Simpson said US and other Western officials viewed the mass killings as “efficacious terror”, an essential building block of the “quasi neo-liberal policies that the West would attempt to impose on Indonesia after Sukarno’s ouster”. They viewed the wholesale annihilation of the PKI and its supporters as “an indispensable prerequisite to Indonesia’s reintegration into the regional political economy and international system, the ascendance of a military modernising regime and the crippling or overthrow of Sukarno".
Immediately after the coup, the US administration rushed to express political support for the Suharto regime. It provided covert monetary assistance to the Indonesian armed forces, while the CIA organised arms from Thailand. The US government also provided communications equipment, medicine and a range of other items, including shoes and uniforms.

“The United States was directly involved to the extent that they provided the Indonesian Armed Forces with assistance that they introduced to help facilitate the mass killings,” Simpson told the conference. The British government also extended an emergency loan of 1 million pounds to Indonesia in late 1965 and promised not to attack Borneo if Indonesia withdrew soldiers engaged in a conflict with British-backed Malaysia, Simpson said.

While Simpson claimed that he found “zero evidence” that the US government masterminded the coup itself, it is unlikely that the military plotters proceeded without assurances from the US and its allies. The full story of US involvement remains to be told.

The pretext for the coup was the kidnapping and murder on September 30 of six generals, allegedly at the PKI's instigation. Suharto swiftly rounded up the “rebels”, took control of the capital and launched his anti-communist pogrom, which was designed to exterminate every known member and supporter of the PKI, along with thousands of trade union members and ordinary workers, peasants and students.

US diplomats and CIA officers, including the former US ambassador to Indonesia and Australia, Marshall Green, subsequently admitted working hand-in-glove with Suharto and his butchers in carrying through the massacres. They personally provided the names of thousands of PKI members from CIA files for the death lists.

In another paper to the conference, David Jenkins, former foreign editor of the Sydney Morning Herald, said that the Australian, British and US embassies were aware of the mass killings, but did not raise a single protest to the systemic slaughter. All the embassies knew the PKI had not initiated the coup but did nothing to protect the victims from the military.

Archive documents released in Australia in 1999 proved that the Johnson administration in Washington was actively agitating for the formation of a military regime, and urging its embassy in Jakarta to co-ordinate closely with the army and insist that the generals act ruthlessly to crush the PKI. When, at the end of October, Washington determined that Suharto should establish a military government, it did so in close consultation with both the British and Australian governments (see “US orchestrated Suharto’s 1965-66 slaughter in Indonesia”).

Other conference speakers highlighted the significant role played by the Muslim organisations Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah in the killings. These right-wing organisations, acting at the behest of and at times organised by the military, willingly participated in the eradication of workers and peasants who were seen as a threat to traditional landowners and vested religious interests.

Historian Greg Fealy from the Australian National University cited instructions from NU leaders to its members exhorting them to physically eliminate all traces of communism. According to Fealy, “they made frequent references to terms such as menumpas [eradicate or annihilate], membersihkan [cleanse], mengganyang [crush], and mengikis habis [eliminate].” Muslim clerics played central roles in overseeing and directing the killings, and coordinated with military officers.

The killings were notable for their gruesome character. Many victims were either beheaded, garroted or had their throats slit with knives or machetes wielded by the Islamic militias. “It was done face-to-face,” Fealy said. Unlike the “mechanical” processes employed by the Nazis, or Pol Pot's farms, the executions were “done by hand”.

American anthropologist Mark Woodward said that in Yogyakarta, leaders of Muhammadiyah, the dominant Islamic group in the area at the time, issued statements declaring the destruction of the Communist Party an individual religious obligation, not just a collective one. Katharine McGregor of the University of Melbourne said that following the killings, NU members touted their participation as “a form of patriotic service to the nation” and reminded Suharto’s New Order regime of the debt owed to the religious community.

In 2000, President Abdurrahman Wahid, who was a senior member of NU, issued an apology to people affected by the violence and proposed to officially lift the ban on communism. The move met vehement
Indonesia history, Genocide 1965-1966, 40 years of silence, Bali bombings

opposition from senior NU members and the military. During a recent interview conducted by McGregor, NU chairman Hasyim Muzadi declined to comment on the role of NU in the 1965 violence, saying "all that happened must be considered history and not opened up again, otherwise another civil war might occur."

The sensitivity of the Indonesian ruling elites to the airing of these terrible crimes underscores the need for workers and young people to learn the political lessons of the PKI's betrayal that led to this strategic defeat for the working class.

BROOKINGS

Protecting Civilians in Disasters and Conflicts
Internal Displacement, Natural Disasters, Civil War, Foreign Aid, Japan in Crisis

Elizabeth Ferris, Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy
The Brookings Institution
March 2011 —
Policy Brief #182

Protection of people from oppressive governments, civil conflict and disasters has moved to the top of the international agenda. The United Nations Security Council authorized all measures necessary to protect civilians in Libya as the airstrikes began. Humanitarian agencies-working in more places and under more difficult conditions than ever before-are grappling with the aftermath of Japan's massive earthquake even as they are also working with displaced people in Haiti and Ivory Coast and responding to hundreds of thousands of people fleeing Libya. And increasingly these agencies are not only trying to assist people through provision of relief items, but also trying to protect them. But with so many global organizations mobilizing to protect civilians when disasters strike and conflicts break out, the concept of protection has begun to lose its distinctive meaning.

Can anyone "do" protection? In The Politics of Protection: The Limits of Humanitarian Action (Brookings Institution Press, 2011), I describe how protection has been stretched to include all manner of important activities-from provision of food to curriculum development, from advocacy to monitoring, from building latrines to voter registration. Beyond affirming the responsibility of governments to protect their people, international law offers no clear guidance on how to translate the principles of protection into action.

Given the likelihood that conflicts will continue and natural disasters will increase in the future, much more attention is needed on the question of protection, which has emerged over the years from international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights law. The most visible part of the international humanitarian system is the vast array of U.N. agencies and nongovernmental organizations. Yet military forces, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and thousands of civil society organizations are also major actors in humanitarian response. This brief describes observations and recommendations on protection in humanitarian work culled from my forthcoming book.
40 YEARS OF SILENCE

500,000 - 1,000,000 People killed, thousands imprisoned

The world looked away

TRAILER
Here's a haunting documentary to look out for. Some 500,000 to 1 million Indonesians were butchered in the mid-1960s.
The synopsis from the official website:
Directed by anthropologist Robert Lemelson and edited by two-time Academy Award winner Pietro Scalia,

"40 Years of Silence: An Indonesian Tragedy" is a moving feature length documentary film about one of the most horrific chapters in Indonesia's history.
In one of the largest unknown mass killings of the 20th century, an estimated 500,000 to 1,000,000 people were secretly and systematically killed in 1965-1966, when General Suharto began a bloody purge of suspected communists throughout Indonesia.

Under his authoritarian rule, any discussion, recognition or memorializing of the mass killings that differed from the Suharto's official state narrative was quickly suppressed.

"40 Years of Silence: An Indonesian Tragedy" follows the compelling testimonies of four individuals and their families from Central Java and Bali, two regions heavily affected by the purge.

As they break their silence publicly for the first time, each family provides an intimate and frightening look at what it was like for survivors of the mass killings.

In chilling detail, they describe the events of 1965 through their own experiences; re-living and reflecting upon the stigmatization and brutalization that they continue to endure on both the village and state levels.

Over time, the survivors and their families attempt to find ways to deal with a tragedy that was not openly recognized by their neighbors, government or the world.

Through their stories, the audience will come to understand modern-day Indonesia's potential for retribution, rehabilitation and reconciliation within this troubled historical context.

The characters' narratives illustrate that such violence creates tears in the social and political fabric of society, which can take generations to heal.
like for survivors of the mass killings. In chilling detail, they describe the events of 1965 through their own experiences; re-living and reflecting upon the stigmatisation and brutalisation that they continue to endure on both the village and state levels.

Over time, the survivors and their families attempt to find ways to deal with a tragedy that was not openly recognised by their neighbours, government or the world. Through their stories, the audience will come to understand modern-day Indonesia’s potential for retribution, rehabilitation and reconciliation within this troubled historical context.

The characters’ narratives illustrate that such violence creates tears in the social and political fabric of society, which can take generations to heal. I wonder if the documentary will touch on the role of CIA officers in Indonesia who reportedly compiled their own “death lists” for Suharto’s killing spree and reportedly ticked off the names as their targets were captured or killed.

This bloody chapter in Indonesian history led to collaboration between Western governments and their poster boy, Suharto, as they carved out Indonesia’s economy for control by multinational corporations.

40 YEARS OF SILENCE
1965 GENOCIDE IN INDONESIA

CIA STALLING STATE DEPARTMENT HISTORIES
STATE HISTORIANS CONCLUDE U.S. PASSED NAMES OF COMMUNISTS TO INDONESIAN ARMY, WHICH KILLED AT LEAST 105,000 IN 1965-66
40 YEARS OF SILENCE - AN INDONESIAN TRAGEDY
**SYNOPSIS:**

40 Years of Silence: An Indonesian Tragedy explores the long-term multi-generational effects of the mass-killings in Indonesia in 1965 and 1966, where approximately half a million to a million suspected communists were killed in six months. The documentary weaves together archival footage, photos, interviews with historians and anthropologists, and the testimonies of victims and perpetrators of the 1965 mass-killings to reveal a complex story of politics, death, suffering, and coping.

Shot over the course of 10 years, with over 400 hours of footage, 40 Years of Silence follows four families, all of whom had family members killed or "disappeared" by soldiers and neighbors in the mass-killings in Bali and Java. The survivors and their children break the silence as they reveal how they are still subjected to and cope with the continual harassment, surveillance, and discrimination by the State and their community members.

Even today, few people are aware of the killings since it was hidden from the world's view with enforced silence for 35 years by the Suharto regime. With both historical and personal accounts, 40 Years of Silence provides a glimpse into a part of world history which needs to be remembered, discussed, and not forgotten.

Robert Lemelson is a research anthropologist at the Semel Institute of Neuroscience, UCLA, and a filmmaker whose work focuses on Southeast Asian studies and the relationship of culture, psychology, and mental illness. He received his M.A. from the University of Chicago, and his doctorate from UCLA in Anthropology. Lemelson has been filming on the islands of Bali and Java in Indonesia since 1997, exploring the relation to culture to such disorders as Schizophrenia, OCD, Tourette's syndrome, and PTSD. 40 Years of Silence is his first feature length documentary and he is working on two more based in Indonesia. In the planning stages are three separate documentaries on psychosis outcome, gender-based violence, and trance and possession.
40 YEARS OF SILENCE

40 Years of Silence-an Indonesian Tragedy

President Obama’s connection to the events of 1965.

President Barack Obama spent part of his childhood in Indonesia during the aftermath of the 1965 mass-killings.

The film “40 Years of Silence” has particular relevance to the U.S. today. President Barack Obama spent four years of his childhood in Jakarta immediately following the events of 1965 in Indonesia. The tragedy of the mass killings under the Suharto regime continued to dominate the social and political climate of Indonesia for decades to come. In 1967, six-year-old Barack Obama moved to Jakarta with his mother and stepfather, a native Indonesian who had been studying in the U.S. At the behest of the Suharto regime, all Indonesians studying abroad were required to return to Indonesia without explanation. At this time, the political climate of Indonesia was one of fear and loss; the Indonesian military, led by General Suharto, had systematically killed between 500,000 to 1,000,000 suspected communist sympathizers. The violence of General Suharto’s regime remained within the vivid memories of Indonesians whose families had been torn apart, although the killings were not openly discussed.

In his book Dreams from my Father, Obama writes that "...we had arrived in Djakarta less than a year after one of the more brutal and swift campaigns of suppression in modern times. The idea frightened [my mother], the notion that history could be swallowed up so completely, the same way the rich and loamy earth could soak up the rivers of blood that had once coursed through the streets; the way people could continue about their business beneath giant posters of the new president as if nothing had happened, a nation busy developing itself"

Obama further writes "I know, I have seen, the desperation and disorder of the powerless: how it twists the lives of children on the streets of Jakarta..." The connection between President Barack Obama and the events of 1965 in Indonesia lends this film a unique relevance for Americans today. The killings under General Suharto were the major political event of Obama's childhood, one that shaped the social, cultural, and political climate of Indonesia during the time that he lived there.

It is our hope that the link between Indonesia's tragic history and our current president will help increase awareness about this untold history.
Recalling the mass killings in Indonesia following the 30 September 1965 movement, Howard Federspiel, the US State Department's intelligence staffer for Indonesia, observed that 'No one cared as long as they were Communists, that they were being butchered.' Indeed, it is hard to find any western governments that expressed concern about what the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) called one of the great mass murders of modern history. Far from it. Western governments, led by the United States, actively sought to create conditions that would lead to a violent clash between the army and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and, once the mass killings began, offered quiet but enthusiastic support to the Indonesian army. The killings of 1965 and 1966 were, in other words, international events of global significance, as the governments that supported the army in carrying out the killings recognised

Encouraging a violent clash
For nearly a decade preceding the events of 30 September 1965 the US feared the growing radicalism and anti-westernism of President Sukarno and the increasing political power of the PKI. These twin fears led the Eisenhower Administration into a massive and disastrous covert operation in support of the regional rebellions of 1957-1958, events that led directly to Sukarno's abandonment of parliamentary democracy and the implementation of the authoritarian system known as Guided Democracy. Eisenhower's successors, John F Kennedy and Lyndon B Johnson, each used programs of economic, technical and military assistance to encourage a greater role for the Indonesian armed forces in Indonesia's economic and political life as a means of blunting or reversing the influence of the PKI.

In August 1964, as relations between the US and Indonesia deteriorated rapidly, in part due to Sukarno's confrontation with Britain over the formation of Malaysia, the US went further, adopting a covert strategy aimed at sparking a violent conflict between the military and the PKI. In doing so the US joined Britain, which had adopted a covert warfare approach in 1963, attempting to frustrate Indonesia's campaign to block the formation of Malaysia and, if possible, provoke 'a prolonged struggle for power leading to civil war or anarchy' in Indonesia itself. Officials in both countries agreed that the army was reluctant to crush the PKI unless first provoked, so the crucial question was: how do we make such a clash inevitable? Edward Peck, Assistant Secretary of State in the Foreign Office suggested 'there might be much to be said for encouraging a premature PKI coup during Sukarno's lifetime' - provided the coup failed.

Speaking out for the army
US and British concerns became moot once the 30 September Movement, known in Indonesia as G30S, acted. Though they reacted to the events of 1 October with surprise and confusion, western officials, including US Assistant Secretary of State, George Ball, immediately recognised that 'If the Army does move they have [the] strength to wipe up [the] earth with [the] PKI and if they don't they may not have another chance.' The CIA warned that the army might only 'settle for action against those directly involved in the murder of the generals and permit Sukarno to get much of his power back'. Since no Western intelligence agencies argued that PKI involvement in G30S extended to the rank and file, one can only conclude that their greatest fear was that the army might refrain from mass violence against the party's unarmed members and supporters.

The US and Britain, joined by Australia, offered their early support for the army by both creating and distributing propaganda, seeking to demonise the PKI and attempting to tie G30S to China. By mid-October, US Secretary of State Dean Rusk cabled Jakarta, noting that the time had come 'to give some indication to [the] military of our attitudes toward recent and current developments'. He writes further: 'If [the] army's willingness to follow through against the PKI is in any way contingent upon or subject to influence by [the] US, we do not wish [to] miss [the] opportunity for US action.' General Nasution provided an opportunity when his aide approached the US Ambassador to Indonesia, Marshall Green, to request portable communications equipment for use by the Army High Command.

As the first reports of mass killings began arriving at the embassy in Jakarta, US officials began considering further covert assistance to the army in the form of food, raw materials, access to credit and weapons for use against the PKI. At the end of October, White House officials began planning to provide covert aid to the Indonesian military, which, according to the US embassy, was 'moving relentlessly to exterminate the PKI'. This marked the beginning of a limited but politically significant stream of aid, which included the provision of small arms and cash to army officers.

In the following weeks western embassies in Jakarta fed on a steady diet of gruesome reports about the massacres. At the end of October, reports of mass attacks against PKI supporters in East, Central and West Java reached the US embassy. A military advisor just returned from Bandung reported that villagers were handing over PKI members and those belonging to PKI affiliated organisations to the army for arrest or execution. On 4 November the embassy cabled the US State Department to say that the Army Paracommando Regiment (RPKAD) forces in Central Java under Sarwo Edhie's command were training and arming Muslim youth to attack the PKI. While army leaders arrested higher level PKI leaders for interrogation, the cable noted that 'smaller fry' were 'being systematically arrested and jailed or executed'. A few days later the US consulate in Medan reported 'wholesale killings' of alleged PKI supporters in North Sumatra and Aceh and the 'specific message' from the army that it was seeking to 'finish off' the PKI.

From propaganda to active assistance
In order to facilitate its covert assistance to the Indonesian army, the US worked with General Sukendro, who had studied at the University of Pittsburgh and was one of the CIA's highest level military contacts. The US also had a designated liaison in Bangkok, with whom it discussed the army's requests for communications equipment, small arms and other supplies totalling more than a million US dollars. Sukendro told his US counterparts that the army's greatest need was for portable voice radios for the general staff in Jakarta; an army voice circuit linking Jakarta with military commands in Sumatra, Java and Sulawesi; and tactical communications equipment for army units operating in Central Java. US officials in Jakarta recommended approval of Sukendro's request as 'critical' in the army's struggle against Sukarno and the PKI.

On 13 November, police information chief, Colonel Budi Juwono, reported that 'from 50-100 PKI members are being killed every night in east and central Java by civilian anti-Communist groups with [the] blessing of [the] Army'. Three days later 'bloodthirsty' Pemuda Pajatasila members informed the consulate in Medan that the organisation 'intends to kill every PKI member they can get their hands on'. Other sources told the consulate that 'much indiscriminate killing is taking place'. Consular officials concluded that, even accounting for exaggerations, a 'real reign of terror' was underway. The CIA reported late in November that former PKI members in Central Java were being 'shot on sight' by the army, while western missionaries in East Java told the US Consulate in Surabaya that 15,000 communists had reportedly been killed in the East Javanese city of Tulungagung alone.

Consular officials concluded that, even accounting for exaggerations, a 'real reign of terror' was underway

British reports largely paralleled those of their American counterparts. In the village of Pasuruan in East Java, a British engineer named Ross Taylor working at Gratit Cotton Spinning Factory described the massacres of workers at the Nebritex textile factory to consular officials. Using lists of known or suspected members of the PKI and the PKI-linked trade union SOBSI, the local army commander placed victims in one of five categories, killing those in the first three and arresting the rest. Ross estimated that 2000 people had been killed in the vicinity of the factory (and at least 200 from the factory itself) since late November, with army units working from the main roads and radiating outwards.
At the height of the massacres the Johnson Administration continued to extend covert assistance directly to the forces carrying out the killings, apparently including small arms delivered to the army through the CIA station in Bangkok. In early December, the State Department approved a covert payment of fifty million rupiah to finance the activities of the Action Front to Crush the 30 September Movement (KAP-Gestapu). Marshall Green noted approvingly that KAP-Gestapu's activities ‘have been an important factor in the army's program', especially in Central Java where it was leading the attack on the PKI. US officials have confirmed that the embassy also turned over lists identifying thousands of PKI leaders and cadres to Indonesian army intermediaries, who used them to track down PKI members for arrest and execution.

US officials, like their counterparts in the army, viewed their campaign to eliminate the PKI leadership and destroy its infrastructure in strategic terms, as ‘a power struggle, not an ideological struggle' with a rival power centre. The British Consul in Medan framed the contest between the army and the PKI in Sumatra, where both groups were concerned with the control of local ports, rubber estates and tin mines, as one for foreign exchange reserves and access to resources. Not surprisingly, the rubber estates in northern Sumatra were the scene of some of the bloodiest attacks against PKI supporters, with, according to the British consulate in Medan, the army ‘arresting, converting or otherwise disposing of some 3,000 PKI members a week'.

An ominous silence
The western response to the mass killings in Indonesia was enthusiastic - and instructive. Washington continued its assistance long after it was clear that mass killings were taking place and in the expectation that US aid would contribute to this end. Not a single official ever spoke against the slaughter. 'Our policy was silence', Deputy US National Security Advisor Walt Rostow later wrote in his correspondence with President Johnson, a good thing, he said, 'in light of the wholesale killings that have accompanied the transition' from Sukarno to Suharto. The US was not alone. Thailand offered rice to the Indonesian army on the condition that it destroy both the PKI and Sukarno. Even the Soviets continued to ship weapons throughout the period in an effort to maintain relations with the military and further undermine Chinese influence. New Zealand embassy officials in Jakarta reported in December 1965 that their Soviet counterparts were 'letting it be known to the Generals that if it comes down to a choice between the PKI or no PKI, the USSR would prefer the latter'.

Indonesia's international supporters could have pressured it to limit the scope and scale of the violence - had they considered it in their interests to do so. But the US and its allies viewed the wholesale annihilation of the PKI and its civilian backers as an indispensable prerequisite to Indonesia's reintegration into the regional political economy, the ascendance of a modernising military regime and the crippling or overthrow of Sukarno. Indeed, Washington did everything in its power to encourage and facilitate the army-led massacre of alleged PKI members and US officials worried only that the killing of the party's unarmed supporters might not go far enough, permitting Sukarno to return to power and frustrate the Administration's emerging plans for a post-Sukarno Indonesia. This was, in short, efficacious terror, an essential building block of the quasi neo-liberal policies the West would attempt to impose on Indonesia in the years to come.

Brad Simpson (bsimpson@princeton.edu) is Assistant Professor of History and International Affairs at Princeton University and the author of Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S. - Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968 (Stanford, 2008).

Brad is also director of the Indonesia and East Timor Documentation Project at the National Security Archive (http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/indonesia/index.html), which is working to declassify US documents on Indonesia from the Suharto era to the present.

Inside Indonesia 99: Jan-Mar 2010

Jan - March 2010

The killings of 1965-66

Indonesia history, Genocide 1965-1966, 40 years of silence, bali bombings

In the course of little more than five months from late 1965 to early 1966, anti-communist Indonesians killed about half a million of their fellow citizens. Nearly all the victims were associated with Indonesia's Left, especially with the Communist Party (PKI) that had risen to unprecedented national prominence under President Sukarno's Guided Democracy. The massacres were presided over and often coordinated or carried out by anti-communist sections of the Indonesian army, but they also engaged wider elements of Indonesian society - both people who had reason to fear communist power and people who wanted to establish clear anti-communist credentials in troubled times.

The killings followed a coup which took place in Jakarta on the morning of 1 October 1965 in which six senior army generals were killed and a revolutionary council was formed, seizing power from Sukarno. For the whole of the New Order period, Indonesian authorities portrayed these events as a communist grab for power, which was to be followed by the wholesale slaughter of their opponents. Sceptics, by contrast, doubted the PKI's involvement and even wondered whether the coup might have been a 'black' operation by conservative forces, intended to compromise the Party. Recent research, especially by John Roosa, who writes for this issue, has shown that the PKI leadership was closely involved in the coup, but that the aims of the operation were far more limited than a seizure of power.

The destruction of the PKI was part of a process that brought Suharto's military-dominated New Order regime to power. The new regime abandoned Sukarno's leftist orientation in foreign and domestic politics and embarked on a program of western-style economic development. The New Order never concealed the fact of the killings. Rather, it portrayed them as both a justifiable response to the alleged threat presented by the PKI and as an outcome of unrestrained populist politics in the 'Old Order'. The undefined memory of massacre was thus recruited to justify the New Order's elaborate structure of political and cultural control and restriction. The alleged evil intentions of the PKI were also used to justify an enduring and vindictive persecution of Indonesians who had been associated with the Left and who survived the massacres. More than a million passed through detention camps, and some were held for ten years or more. After their release, they faced continuing restrictions on their civil rights within Indonesia and their family members - including children not even born in 1965 - faced harassment and restriction.

One of the great achievements of the post-Suharto period is the fact that it is now possible to begin the complex work of better documenting the events that occurred in 1965 and in the years that followed. This process is slow and painstaking. It is made difficult by a diminishing pool of informants, the fading memories of those who are still alive, the decay of physical evidence and continuing prejudice in local communities. Groups trying to uncover detail of the killings have at times faced official harassment and many of the formal restrictions against former communists remain in place. Significant progress has nevertheless been made, drawing on rich veins of oral history and documentary sources within and outside Indonesia.

It is now possible to begin the complex work of better documenting the events that occurred in 1965 and in the years that followed

For all this growing body of analysis, the killings themselves remain tantalisingly elusive. Direct witnesses were few, and perpetrators have for the most part remained stubbornly silent. The usual reluctance of killers to talk about what they have done is compounded by the fear of reprisals or claims for compensation. Many Indonesians, too, look back on a national history that is studded with difficult, controversial and divisive events and argue that Indonesians should instead

look forward and focus on improving their future rather than dwelling on past crimes. On both sides of the Left-Right divide, moreover, there has been a feeling that a too-detailed investigation of the precise circumstances of the killings might reveal sordid, unpleasant details that would compromise the stark elegance of mainstream narratives both of communist victimhood and of communist evil. All but one of the contributors to this important edition of Inside Indonesia presented papers based on their original research at a conference on the same theme organised by Tony Reid, Doug Kammen, Kate McGregor and Vannessa Hearman and held at the Asia Research Institute in Singapore in June 2009. We would like to thank the conference organisers, who are editing a book based on the conference proceedings, for encouraging participants to also contribute to this collection. Many more researchers were involved in that conference than could possibly be showcased here.

This edition begins with an article by Brad Simpson, reminds us of the support western governments provided to the army and other anti-communist forces at this time. This is followed by Greg Fealy's account of Nahdlatul Ulama members' involvement in the events of 1965-66. Dahlia Gratia Setiyawan, Vannessa Hearman, Taufik Ahmad and Annie Pohlman follow with harrowing accounts of Communists' lives under attack, on the run and in detention camps in Java and Sulawesi, while Katharine McGregor describes the terrible pressures experienced by survivors and their supporters. John Roosa's dictionary, which offers readers insight into the mechanics of the coup itself, rounds the collection out. In these articles we get a glimpse of a terrible world that has now largely receded into memory. But the task of understanding the circumstances that could bring such misery and barbarity to a country which achieved independence with such hope for justice and prosperity remains a task for every generation.

Robert Cribb (robert.cribb@anu.edu.au) is professor of History at the Australian National University and editor of the 1990 volume, The Indonesian Killings 1965-1966: Studies from Java and Bali.

Michele Ford (michele.ford@sydney.edu.au) chairs the Department of Indonesian Studies at the University of Sydney, where she teaches about social activism and human rights in Southeast Asia.

Inside Indonesia 99: Jan-Mar 2010


May 20, 1990

Ex-agents say CIA compiled death lists for Indonesians
After 25 years, Americans speak of their role in exterminating Communist Party
by Kathy Kadane, States News Service, 1990

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. government played a significant role in one of the worst massacres of the century by supplying the names of thousands of Communist Party leaders to the Indonesian army, which hunted down the leftists and killed them, former U.S. diplomats say.

For the first time, U.S. officials acknowledge that in 1965 they systematically compiled comprehensive lists of Communist operatives, from top echelons down to village cadres. As many as 5,000 names were furnished to the Indonesian army, and the Americans later checked off the names of those who had been killed or captured, according to the U.S. officials.

The killings were part of a massive bloodletting that
took an estimated 250,000 lives

The purge of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) was part of a U.S. drive to ensure that Communists did not come to power in the largest country in Southeast Asia, where the United States was already fighting an undeclared war in Vietnam. Indonesia is the fifth most-populous country in the world. Silent for a quarter-century, former senior U.S. diplomats and CIA officers described in lengthy interviews how they aided Indonesian President Suharto, then army leader, in his attack on the PKI.

"It really was a big help to the army," said Robert J. Martens, a former member of the U.S. Embassy's political section who is now a consultant to the State Department. "They probably killed a lot of people, and I probably have a lot of blood on my hands, but that's not all bad. There's a time when you have to strike hard at a decisive moment."

White House and State Department spokesmen declined comment on the disclosures. Although former deputy CIA station chief Joseph Lazarsky and former diplomat Edward Masters, who was Martens' boss, said CIA agents contributed in drawing up the death lists, CIA spokesman Mark Mansfield said, "There is no substance to the allegation that the CIA was involved in the preparation and/or distribution of a list that was used to track down and kill PKI members. It is simply not true."

Indonesian Embassy spokesman Makarim Wibisono said he had no personal knowledge of events described by former U.S. officials. "In terms of fighting the Communists, as far as I'm concerned, the Indonesian people fought by themselves to eradicate the Communists," he said.

Martens, an experienced analyst of communist affairs, headed an embassy group of State Department and CIA officers that spent two years compiling the lists. He later delivered them to an army intermediary.

People named on the lists were captured in overwhelming numbers, Martens said, adding, "It's a big part of the reason the PKI has never come back."

The PKI was the third-largest Communist Party in the world, with an estimated 3 million members. Through affiliated organizations such as labor and youth groups it claimed the loyalties of another 17 million.

In 1966 the Washington Post published an estimate that 500,000 were killed in the purge and the brief civil war it triggered. In a 1968 report, the CIA estimated there had been 250,000 deaths, and called the carnage "one of the worst mass murders of the 20th century."

U.S. Embassy approval
Approval for the release of the names came from the top U.S. Embassy officials, including former Ambassador Marshall Green, deputy chief of mission Jack Lydman and political section chief Edward Masters, the three acknowledged in interviews.

Declassified embassy cables and State Department reports from early October 1965, before the names were turned over, show that U.S. officials knew Suharto had begun roundups of PKI cadres, and that the embassy had unconfirmed reports that firing squads were being formed to kill PKI prisoners.

Former CIA Director William Colby, in an interview, compared the embassy's campaign to identify the PKI leadership to the CIA's Phoenix Program in Vietnam. In 1965, Colby was the director of the CIA's Far East division and was responsible for directing U.S. covert strategy in Asia.

"That's what I set up in the Phoenix Program in Vietnam -- that I've been kicked around for a lot," he said. "That's exactly what it was. It was an attempt to identify the structure" of the Communist Party.

Phoenix was a joint U.S.-South Vietnamese program set up by the CIA in December 1967 that aimed at neutralizing members of the National Liberation Front, the Vietcong political cadres. It was widely criticized for alleged human rights abuses.

"You shoot them"
"The idea of identifying the local apparatus was designed to -- well, you go out and get them to surrender, or you capture or you shoot them," Colby said of the Phoenix Program. "I mean, it was a war, and they were fighting. So it was really aimed at providing intelligence for operations rather than a big picture of the thing."

In 1962, when he took over as chief of the CIA's Far East division, Colby said he discovered the United States did not have comprehensive lists of PKI activists. Not having the lists "could have been criticized as a gap in the intelligence system," he said, adding they were useful for "operation planning" and provided a picture of how the party was organized. Without such lists, he said, "you're fighting blind."

Asked if the CIA had been responsible for sending Martens, a foreign service officer, to Jakarta in 1963 to compile the lists, Colby said, "Maybe, I don't know. Maybe we did it. I've forgotten."
The lists were a detailed who's-who of the leadership of the party of 3 million members, Martens said. They included names of provincial, city and other local PKI committee members, and leaders of the "mass organizations," such as the PKI national labor federation, women's and youth groups.

**Better information**

"I know we had a lot more information" about the PKI "than the Indonesians themselves," Green said. Martens "told me on a number of occasions that ... the government did not have very good information on the Communist setup, and he gave me the impression that this information was superior to anything they had."

Masters, the embassy's political section chief, said he believed the army had lists of its own, but they were not as comprehensive as the American lists. He said he could not remember whether the decision to release the names had been cleared with Washington.

The lists were turned over piecemeal, Martens said, beginning at the top of the communist organization. Martens supplied thousands of names to an Indonesian emissary over a number of months, he said. The emissary was an aide to Adam Malik, an Indonesian minister who was an ally of Suharto in the attack on the Communists.

Interviewed in Jakarta, the aide, Tirta Kentjana ("Kim") Adhyatman, confirmed he had met with Martens and received lists of thousands of names, which he in turn gave to Malik. Malik passed them on to Suharto's headquarters, he said.

**"Shooting list"**

Embassy officials carefully recorded the subsequent destruction of the PKI organization. Using Martens' lists as a guide, they checked off names of captured and assassinated PKI leaders, tracking the steady dismantling of the party apparatus, former U.S. officials said.

Information about who had been captured and killed came from Suharto's headquarters, according to Joseph Lazarsky, deputy CIA station chief in Jakarta in 1965. Suharto's Jakarta headquarters was the central collection point for military reports from around the country detailing the capture and killing of PKI leaders, Lazarsky said.

"We were getting a good account in Jakarta of who was being picked up," Lazarsky said. "The army had a 'shooting list' of about 4,000 or 5,000 people."

Detention centers were set up to hold those who were not killed immediately.

"They didn't have enough goon squads to zap them all, and some individuals were valuable for interrogation," Lazarsky said. "The infrastructure was zapped almost immediately. We knew what they were doing. We knew they would keep a few and save them for the kangaroo courts, but Suharto and his advisers said, if you keep them alive, you have to feed them."

Masters, the chief of the political section, said, "We had these lists" constructed by Martens, "and we were using them to check off what was happening to the party, what the effect" of the killings "was on it."

Lazarsky said the checkoff work was also carried out at the CIA's intelligence directorate in Washington.

**Leadership destroyed**

By the end of January 1966, Lazarsky said, the checked-off names were so numerous the CIA analysts in Washington concluded the PKI leadership had been destroyed.

"No one cared, as long as they were Communists, that they were being butchered," said Howard Federspiel, who in 1965 was the Indonesia expert at the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. "No one was getting very worked up about it."

Asked about the checkoffs, Colby said, "We came to the conclusion that with the sort of Draconian way it was carried out, it really set them" -- the communists -- "back for years."

Asked if he meant the checkoffs were proof that the PKI leadership had been caught or killed, he said, "Yeah, yeah, that's right, ... the leading elements, yeah."

More from Kathy Kadane...


To the Editors:

I very much admired Ms. Laber's piece on Indonesian politics and the origins of the Soeharto regime. In connection with her assertion that little is known about a CIA (or US) role in the 1965 coup and the army massacre that followed, I would like to make your readers aware of a compelling body of evidence about this that is publicly available, but the public access to it is little known.

It consists of a series of on-the-record, taped interviews with the men who headed the US embassy in Jakarta or were at high levels in Washington agencies in 1965. I published a news story based on the interviews in The Washington Post ("U.S. Officials' Lists Aided Indonesian Bloodbath in '60s," May 21, 1990), and have since transferred the tapes, my notes, and a small collection of documents, including a few declassified cables on which the story was based, to the
The former officials interviewed included Ambassador Marshall Green, Deputy Chief of Mission Jack Lydman, Political Counsellor (later Ambassador) Edward E. Masters, Robert Martens (an analyst of the Indonesian left working under Masters’ supervision), and (then) director of the Central Intelligence Agency’s Far East division, William Colby.

The tapes, along with notes of conversations, show that the United States furnished critical intelligence -- the names of thousands of leftist activists, both Communist and non-Communist -- to the Indonesian Army that were then used in the bloody manhunt.

There were other details that illustrate the depth of US involvement and culpability in the killings which I learned from former top-level embassy officials, but have not previously published. For example, the US provided key logistical equipment, hastily shipped in at the last minute as Soeharto weighed the risky decision to attack. Jeeps were supplied by the Pentagon to speed troops over Indonesia’s notoriously bad roads, along with "dozens and dozens" of field radios that the Army lacked. As Ms. Laber noted, the US (namely, the Pentagon) also supplied "arms." Cables show these were small arms, used for killing at close range.

The supply of radios is perhaps the most telling detail. They served not only as field communications but also became an element of a broad, US intelligence-gathering operation constructed as the manhunt went forward. According to a former embassy official, the Central Intelligence Agency hastily provided the radios -- state-of-the-art Collins KWM-2s, high-frequency single-sideband transceivers, the highest-powered mobile unit available at that time to the civilian and commercial market. The radios, stored at Clark Field in the Philippines, were secretly flown by the US Air Force into Indonesia. They were then distributed directly to Soeharto’s headquarters -- called by its acronym KOSTRAD -- by Pentagon representatives. The radios plugged a major hole in Army communications: at that critical moment, there were no means for troops on Java and the out-islands to talk directly with Jakarta.

While the embassy told reporters the US had no information about the operation, the opposite was true. There were at least two direct sources of information. During the weeks in which the American lists were being turned over to the Army, embassy officials met secretly with men from Soeharto’s intelligence unit at regular intervals concerning who had been arrested or killed. In addition, the US more generally had information from its systematic monitoring of Army radios. According to a former US official, the US listened in to the broadcasts on the US-supplied radios for weeks as the manhunt went forward, overhearing, among other things, commands from Soeharto’s intelligence unit to kill particular persons at given locations.

The method by which the intercepts were accomplished was also described. The mobile radios transmitted to a large, portable antenna in front of KOSTRAD (also hastily supplied by the US -- I was told it was flown in in a C-130 aircraft). The CIA made sure the frequencies the Army would use were known in advance to the National Security Agency. NSA intercepted the broadcasts at a site in Southeast Asia, where its analysts subsequently translated them. The intercepts were then sent on to Washington, where analysts merged them with reports from the embassy. The combined reporting, intercepts plus "human" intelligence, was the primary basis for Washington’s assessment of the effectiveness of the manhunt as it destroyed the organizations of the left, including, inter alia, the Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI.

A word about the relative importance of the American lists. It appears the CIA had some access prior to 1965 to intelligence files on the PKI housed at the G-2 section of the Indonesian Army, then headed by Major-General S. Parman. CIA officials had been dealing with Parman about intelligence concerning the PKI, among other matters, in the years prior to the coup, according to a former US official who was involved (Parman was killed in the coup). The former official, whose account was corroborated by others whom I interviewed, said that the Indonesian lists, or files, were considered inadequate by US analysts because they identified PKI officials at the "national" level, but failed to identify thousands who ran the party at the regional and municipal levels, or who were secret operatives, or had some other standing, such as financier.

When asked about the possible reason for this apparent inadequacy, former US Ambassador Marshall Green, in a December 1989 interview, characterized his understanding this way:

I know that we had a lot more information than the Indonesians themselves.... For one thing, it would have been rather dangerous [for the Indonesian military to construct such a list] because the Communist Party was so pervasive and [the intelligence gatherers] would be fingered...because of the people up the line [the higher-ups, some of whom sympathized with the PKI]. In the [Indonesian] Air Force, it would have been lethal to do that. And probably that would be true for the police, the Marines, the Navy -- in the Army, it depended. My guess is that once this thing broke, the Army was desperate for information as to who was who [in the PKI].

National Security Archive in Washington, D.C. The Archive is a nongovernmental research institute and library, located at the George Washington University.
By the end of January 1966, US intelligence assessments comparing the American lists with the reports of those arrested or killed showed the Army had destroyed the PKI. The general attitude was one of great relief: "Nobody cared" about the butchery and mass arrests because the victims were Communists, one Washington official told me.

-- Kathy Kadane

The Indonesian Massacres and the CIA
by Ralph McGehee
Covert Action Quarterly, Fall 1990

Ralph McGehee worked for the CIA from 1952 until 1977 and now writes about intelligence matters, notably the book Deadly Deceits -- My 25 years in the CIA (New York: Sheridan Square Press, 1983). He has compiled a computer data base on CIA activities. Persons interested may write to him at: 422 Arkansas Ave., Herndon, VA 22070.

In my original article ( The Nation, April 11, 1981) I tried to explain, through the constraints of the secrecy agreement and the deletions by the CIA's review board, one aspect of the Agency's successful effort to manipulate events in Indonesia in late 1965 and early 1966. The article was based on a classified CIA study of which I was custodian while working in the International Communism Branch of the CIA's Counterintelligence Staff. The Nation joined with me in an unsuccessful lawsuit by the ACLU to gain release of the deleted portions of the article. The Agency claims it cannot delete unclassified lies or speculations.

By heavily censoring my article, it effectively admitted to an Agency role in the operation.

In a recent story in the San Francisco Examiner, researcher Kathy Kadane quotes CIA and State department officials who admit compiling lists of names of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), making those lists available to the Indonesian military, and checking names off as people were "eliminated." The killings were part of a massive bloodletting after an abortive coup attempt taking, according to various estimates, between 250,000 and 1,000,000 lives and ultimately led to the overthrow of President Sukarno's government.

Since then a debate has simmered over what happened. A recent study based on information from former Johnson ad ministration officials, asserted that for months the U.S. "did their damnedest" through public pressure and more discreet methods, to prod the Indonesian army to move against Sukarno without success. Debate continues over the origins of the coup attempt called Gestapu. Was it the result of CIA machinations, a takeover maneuver by General Suharto, a revolt by leftist officers under the control of the PKI, a power play by the People's Republic of China, a pre-emptive strike by Sukarno loyalists to prevent a move by officers friendly to the CIA, some combination of these factors, or others as yet unknown?

I confess to no inside knowledge of the Gestapu.

Historical Background
It is well known that the CIA had long sought to unseat Sukarno: by funding an opposition political party in the mid-1950s, sponsoring a massive military overthrow attempt in the mid-1958, planning his assassination in 1961, and by rigging intelligence to inflame official U.S. concerns in order to win approval for planned covert actions.

Before attempting to describe one aspect of the CIA's role, it is essential to provide background on the scope and nature of its worldwide operations. Between 1961 and 1975 the Agency conducted 900 major or sensitive operations, and thousands of lesser covert actions. The majority of its operations were propaganda, election or paramilitary. Countries of major concern, such as Indonesia in the early 1960s, were usually subjected to the CIA's most concerted attention.

Critics of the CIA have aptly described the mainstays of such attention: "discrediting political groups... by forged documents that may be attributed to them. . . .", faking "communist weapon shipments," capturing communist documents and then inserting forgeries prepared by the Agency's Technical Services Division. The CIA's "Mighty Wurlitzer" then emblazoned and disseminated the details of such "discoveries."

The Mighty Wurlitzer was a worldwide propaganda mechanism consisting of hundreds or even thousands of media representatives and officials including, over a period of years, approximately 400 members of the American media. The CIA
has used the Wurlitzer and its successors to plant stories and to suppress expository or critical reporting in order to manipulate domestic and international perceptions.

From the early 1980s, many media operations formerly the responsibility of the CIA have been funded somewhat overtly by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). From the earliest days, the Agency's International Organizations Division (IOD) implemented and coordinated its extensive covert operations. The division's activities created or assisted international organizations for youth, students, teachers, workers, veterans, journalists, and jurists. The CIA used, and continues to use, the various labor, student, and other suborned organizations not only for intelligence and propaganda purposes, but also to participate in elections and paramilitary operations and to assist in overthrowing governments. At the same time, the CIA manipulates their organizational publications for covert propaganda goals.

The labor unions the CIA creates and subsidizes, in their more virulent stages, provide strong-arm goon squads who burn buildings, threaten and beat up opponents, pose as groups of the opposition to discredit them, terrorize and control labor meetings, and participate in coups.

Use of "Subversive Control Watch Lists"
As a matter of course, the Agency develops close relationships with security services in friendly nations and exploits these in many ways-by recruiting unilateral sources to spy on the home government, by implementing pro-U.S. policies, and by gathering and exchanging intelligence. As one aspect of those liaisons, the CIA universally compiles local "Subversive Control Watch Lists" of leftists for attention by the local government. Frequently that attention is the charter of government death squads.

After the CIA's overthrow of Arbenz's government in Guatemala in 1954, the U.S. gave the new government lists of opponents to be eliminated. In Chile from 1971 through 1973, the CIA fomented a military coup through forgery and propaganda operations and compiled arrest lists of thousands, many of whom were later arrested and assassinated. In Bolivia in 1975, the CIA provided lists of progressive priests and nuns to the government which planned to harass, arrest and expel them. To curry the favor of Khomeini, in 1983 the CIA gave his government a list of KGB agents and collaborators operating in Iran. Khomeini then executed 200 suspects and closed down the communist Tudeh party. In Thailand, provided the names of hundreds of leftists to Thai security services.

The Phoenix program in Vietnam was a massive U.S.-backed program to compile arrest and assassination lists of the Viet Cong for action by CIA-created Provisional Reconnaissance Unit death squads. In fact, former Director of the CIA William Colby compared the Indonesian operation directly to the Vietnam Phoenix Program. Colby further admitted directing the CIA to concentrate on compiling lists of members of the PKI and other left groups.

In 1963, responding to Colby's direction, U.S.-trained Indonesian trade unionists began gathering the names of workers who were members or sympathizers of unions affiliated with the national labor federation, SOBSI. These trade unionist spies laid the groundwork for many of the massacres of 1965-1966. The CIA also used elements in the 105,000 strong Indonesian national police force to penetrate and gather information on the PKI.

Providing "Watch Lists" based on technical and human penetration of targeted groups is a continuing program of CIA covert operators. Today, U.S.-advised security services in El Salvador, using the techniques of the Phoenix program, operate throughout El Salvador and have taken a heavy toll on peasants, activists and labor leaders in that country. In the late 1980s, the CIA began assisting the Philippine government in the conduct of "low-intensity" operations by, among other things, computerizing security service records of leftists and assisting in the development of a national identity card program. Wherever the CIA cooperates with other national security services it is safe to assume that it also compiles and passes "Subversive Control Watch Lists."

Putting the Pieces Together
All of this is essential to understanding what happened in Indonesia in 1965 and 1966. In September and October of 1965, the murder of six top military officers during the Gestapu coup attempt provided a pretext for destroying the PKI and removing Sukarno. Surviving officers—principally General Suharto, who was not a target-rallied the army and defeated the coup, ultimately unseating Sukarno.

Two weeks before the coup, the army had been warned that the PKI was plotting to assassinate army leaders. The PKI, nominally backed by Sukarno, was a legal and formidable organization and was the third largest Communist Party in the
It claimed three million members, and through affiliated organizations—such as labor and youth groups—it had the support of 17 million others. The Army's anxiety had been fed by rumors throughout 1965 that mainland China was smuggling arms to the PKI for an imminent revolt. Such a story appeared in a Malaysian newspaper, citing Bangkok sources which relied in turn on Hong Kong sources. Such untraceability is a telltale mark of the Mighty Wurlitzer.

Less subtle propaganda claimed that the PKI was a tool of the Red Chinese and planned to infiltrate and divide the armed forces. To bolster these allegations, "communist weapons" were discovered inside Chinese crates labeled as construction material. Far more inflammatory news reporting prior to October 1965 claimed the PKI had a secret list of civilian and military leaders marked for beheading.

After the coup attempt the Indonesian Army in the main left the PKI alone, as there was no credible evidence to substantiate the horror stories in the press.

Suddenly documents were serendipitously discovered providing "proof" of PKI guilt. On October 23, 1965, the Suara Islam reported:

...millions of copies of the text of a proclamation of the counterrevolutionary Gestapu...have been recovered.... The text...was obviously printed in the CPR [People's Republic of China]. Steel helmets and a large quantity of military equipment have also been found.... There is in controvertible evidence of the CPR's involvement.... The arms sent by the CPR were shipped under cover of "diplomatic immunity."...other important documents offer irrefutable evidence of the involvement of the CPR Embassy and the CPR ambassador....

On October 30, 1965 Major General Suharto, in a speech before a military audience, angrily denounced the PKI saying that captured documents proved the PKI was behind Gestapu. Suharto demanded that the "Communists be completely uprooted."

On November 2, the Indonesian Armed Forces Bulletin asserted that the PKI had a plan for revolution, and published supposed PKI directives for the period following the October coup attempt. The document stated that the PKI "is only supporting the revolutionary council" that the coup tried to establish. It added that if the council were crushed the PKI would "directly confront" the generals whom the coup leaders accused of planning to overthrow President Sukarno. The document also said, "when the revolution is directly led by the PKI, we can achieve victory because the command will be under the PKI-our hidden strength is in the armed forces."

Military leaders began a bloody extermination campaign. Civilians involved were either recruited and trained by the army on the spot, or were drawn from groups such as the army- and CIA-sponsored SOKSI trade unions [Central Organization of Indonesian Socialist Employees], and allied student organizations. Media fabrications had played a key role in preparing public opinion and mobilizing these groups for the massacre.

The documents, manufactured stories of communist plans and atrocities, and claims of communist arms shipments created an atmosphere of hysteria, resulting in the slaughter and the establishment of a dictatorship that still exists today.

The Agency wrote a secret study of what it did in Indonesia. [One sentence censored.] The CIA was extremely proud of its [one word censored] and recommended it as a model for future operations [one half sentence censored].

*Yesterday's Fake News, Today's Fake History*

The CIA desperately wants to conceal evidence of its role in the massacre, which it admits was one of the century's worst. The U.S. media seem equally determined to protect the American image from consequences of covert operations.

Reaction to Kadane's new revelations was swift. An Op-Ed by columnist Stephen S. Rosenfeld in the July 20, 1990 Washington Post, and an article by correspondent Michael Wines in the July 12, 1990 New York Times, each deny any CIA role in the massacre. Rosenfeld, reversing his conclusions of a week before, ignores the new evidence, cites one of many academic studies, and concludes with certainty: "For me, the question of the American role in Indonesia is closed."

Prior to his article, Wines interviewed me. His approach was to reject any information that might implicate the Agency. I told him virtually everything in this article and more. He dismissed the information and instead quoted John Hughes, an "observer removed from the controversy," citing him as formerly of the Christian Science Monitor but failing to mention that he was also State Department spokesman from 1982 to 1985.

In an interview with Kadane, Hughes claimed that during the coup which brought Suharto to power, he functioned as the "eyes and ears of the embassy." Wines was uninterested.

Deadly Deceits: My 25 Years in the CIA
by Ralph W. McGehee

Ralph McGehee's book serves as an eye-opening glimpse into our nation's CIA history. From his beginning as a "gung-ho" patriot until his growing disillusionment with the Agency, leading to retirement, McGehee reveals the truth behind the many of the CIA's operations, not only domestically and in well-known regions of the world, but also within areas quite unaddressed by the common American.

His conclusion is deadly: If the Agency reported the truth about the Third World, it would say that the US installs foreign leaders, arms their armies and empowers their police, all to help those leaders repress, kill, torture and impoverish an angry, defiant people in order to maintain their position of privilege.'

Subversive control watch lists are an effective and deadly political tool long used by U.S. intelligence, so deadly that the Agency cannot allow them to become public knowledge. Keeping them secret depends on at least two things: Agency censorship of government employees, and self-censorship by the mainstream media.

Ralph McGehee worked for the CIA from 1952 until 1977 and now writes about intelligence matters, notably the book Deadly Deceits -- My 25 years in the CIA (New York: Sheridan Square Press, 1983). He has compiled a computer data base on CIA activities. Persons interested may write to him at: 422 Arkansas Ave., Herndon, VA 22070.

A Western Conspiracy Of Silence
Excerpt

The lack of investigation of the Indonesian genocide has been due to a range of reasons but the central reason has undoubtedly been the huge vested interest of both the Suharto regime and ruling Western forces in leaving the past undisturbed. "Western governments and much of the Western media preferred Suharto and the New Order to the PKI [Indonesian Communist Party] and the Old, and have been in many cases comfortable with the simple statement that some hundreds of thousands of 'Communists' were killed. A close investigation of who was being killed - and why - ran the risk not just of complicating a simple story but of uncovering skeletons in the New Order closet" ("The Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966: Studies from Bali and Java", edited by Robert Cribb, Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, no.21, 1990, pp. 5, 6). Instead: "If anything, the Indonesian killings have been treated as if they fall into an anomalous category of 'accidental' mass death" (ibid, p16).

Read Full Article

CIA STALLING STATE DEPARTMENT HISTORIES

ARCHIVE POSTS ONE OF TWO DISPUTED VOLUMES ON WEB

STATE HISTORIANS CONCLUDE U.S. PASSED NAMES OF COMMUNISTS.
TO INDONESIAN ARMY, WHICH KILLED AT LEAST 105,000 IN 1965-66

WASHINGTON, D.C., 27 July – George Washington University’s National Security Archive today posted on the Web (www.nsaarchive.org) one of two State Department documentary histories whose release the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency is stalling, even though the documents included in the volumes were officially declassified in 1998 and 1999, according to public State Department records. The two disputed State Department volumes cover Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines in the years 1964-68 and Greece-Turkey-Cyprus in the same period. The CIA, as well as action officers at the State Department, have prevented the official release of either volume, already printed and bound by the Government Printing Office. The National Security Archive obtained the Indonesia volume posted today when the GPO shipped copies to various GPO bookstores; but the Greece volume is still locked up in GPO warehouses.

The Indonesia volume includes significant new documentation on the Indonesian Army’s campaign against the Indonesia Communist Party (PKI) in 1965-66, which brought to power the dictator Suharto. (Ironically, Suharto’s successor, ex-President Wahid, is on his way to Baltimore this week for medical treatment, and has been replaced by his vice-president, who is the daughter of the man Suharto overthrew.) For example, U.S. Embassy reporting on November 13, 1965 passed on information from the police that “from 50 to 100 PKI members were being killed every night in East and Central Java...”; and the Embassy admitted in an April 15, 1966 airgram to Washington that “We frankly do not know whether the real figure [of PKI killed] is closer to 100,000 or 1,000,000 but believe it wiser to err on the side of the lower estimates, especially when questioned by the press.” On page 339, the volume seems to endorse the figure of 105,000 killed that was proposed in 1970 by foreign service officer Richard Cabot Howland in a classified CIA publication.

On another highly controversial issue – that of U.S. involvement in the killings – the volume includes an “Editorial Note” on page 387 describing Ambassador Marshall Green’s August 10, 1966 airgram to Washington reporting that an Embassy-prepared list of top Communist leaders with Embassy attribution removed “is apparently being used by Indonesian security authorities who seem to lack even the simplest overt information on PKI leadership at the time...”. On December 2, 1965, Green endorsed a 50 million rupiah covert payment to the Kap-Gestapu movement leading the repression; but the December 3 CIA response to State is withheld in full (pp. 379-380).

The CIA’s intervention in the State Department publication is only the latest in a series of such controversies, dating back to 1990 when the CIA censored a State volume on Iran in the early 1950s to leave out any reference to the CIA-backed coup that overthrew Mossadegh in 1953. The chair of the State Department historical advisory committee resigned in protest, producing an outcry among academics and journalists (see “History Bleached at State,” New York Times editorial, May 16, 1990, p. A26: “At the very moment that Moscow is coming clean on Stalin’s massacre of Polish officers, Washington is putting out history in the old Soviet mode.”). Congress then passed a law in 1991 requiring the State Department volumes to include covert operations as well as overt diplomacy, so as to provide an accurate historical picture of U.S. foreign policy, 30 years after the events.

Indonesia’s 1965 Holocaust
To confront this threat the powerful CIA-backed General Suharto and his colleagues and troops sprang into action. They charged that the PKI was behind the uprising, and that Communist China was backing the PKI. To “restore order” General Suharto grabbed control of the Sukarno government, and then crushed the faction involved in the uprising in a matter of days. With Sukarno neutralized General Suharto then turned his attention to the PKI and other potential rivals. Once again, the CIA provided the Indonesian military with long lists of “communists” to be eliminated. Over the next few years Indonesia was engulfed in a terrible bloodbath, where suspected communists, large numbers of ethnic Chinese, and any other undesirables were arrested, tortured or killed. Estimates of the final death toll range from 500,000 to a million victims. The U.S. government hailed the transfer of power and muted any criticism of the massacres which left the rivers of Indonesia running red with blood. Initially, Washington denied playing any role in the coup. But in 1990, U.S. diplomats admitted to a reporter that they had handed lists of suspected communists to the rampaging Indonesian army.

Robert Martens, who headed the Jakarta embassy team that compiled the lists, told Kathy Kadane of States News Service: “It really was a big help to the army. ... I probably have a lot of blood on my hands, but that's not all bad. There's a time when you have to strike hard at a decisive moment.” Army-led massacres wiped out the PKI and devastated its mass base in “one of the worst mass murders of the 20th century,” comparable to the atrocities of Hitler, Stalin, and Mao, the CIA reported, judging “the Indonesian coup” to be “certainly one of the most significant events of the 20th century”. Perhaps half a million or more were killed within a few months.

The events were greeted undisguised euphoria. The New York Times described the “staggering mass slaughter” as “a gleam of light in Asia,” praising Washington for keeping its own role quiet so as not to embarrass the “Indonesian moderates” who were cleansing their society, then rewarding them with generous aid. Time praised the “quietly determined” leader Suharto with his “scrupulously constitutional” procedures “based on law, not on mere power” as he presided over a “boiling bloodbath” that was “the West’s best news for years in Asia”.

During the period 1965-69, and especially during 1965-66, a series of mass murders took place in Indonesia which led to the institution in power of President Suharto and the opening up of the country to Western capitalism. Possibly more than a million people were slaughtered. In the documentary film on globalisation by John Pilger, "The New Rulers of the World" (2001 - screened on TV1, 10/10/01), there are scenes of some of the relatives of the victims of the massacres secretly exhuming the bones of their loved ones. As Pilger notes, evidence has increasingly come to light of the murderous role that the US and British governments performed both in initiating and in helping perpetrate the killings, and in the creation of the long reign of terror that ensued. The full story amounts to a remarkable and chilling record of capitalist genocide, cover-up, and subsequent foundation of a model which was then widely applied elsewhere in the Third World to eliminate the enemies of the West and ensure future profits. To a quite considerable extent, the new rulers of the world built capitalist success on the Indonesian genocide, and the platform it served for globalising Indonesia and the rest of the planet.

To date, the true story of what really happened is only partially told, only partly visible through a fog of propaganda and deception, and a dearth of information. However, trying to help unravel it, and to disclose it to a wider audience, is to embark on a greatly enlightening journey into the human psyche, into the political economy of capitalism, and into the meaning of the Western tradition of the Enlightenment today - the values of freedom, democracy, justice, truth, and respect for human rights. One comes face to face with the reality and psychology of political ideology, violence and civilised values, and what these mean in relation to the philosophical concept of truth. In such matters, if any conception of "truth" has an inevitable, insoluble element of subjectivism, there is always the question of the actual facts in the most fundamental and reportorial sense: who was killed by whom, where, how and why?

**Good and Bad Genocide**

Double standards in coverage of Suharto and Pol Pot
by Edward S. Herman

Coverage of the fall of Suharto reveals with startling clarity the ideological biases and propaganda role of the mainstream media. Suharto was a ruthless dictator, a grand larcenist and a mass killer with as many victims as Cambodia's Pol Pot. But he served U.S. economic and geopolitical interests, was helped into power by Washington, and his dictatorial rule was warmly supported for 32 years by the U.S. economic and political establishment. The U.S. was still training the most repressive elements of Indonesia's security forces as Suharto's rule was collapsing in 1998, and the Clinton administration had established especially close relations with the dictator ("our kind of guy," according to a senior administration official quoted in the New York Times, 10/31/95).

Suharto's overthrow of the Sukarno government in 1965-66 turned Indonesia from Cold War "neutralism" to fervent anti-Communism, and wiped out the Indonesian Communist Party- exterminating a sizable part of its mass base in the process, in widespread massacres that claimed at least 500,000 and perhaps more than a million victims. The U.S. establishment's enthusiasm for the coup-cum-mass murder was ecstatic (see Chomsky and Herman, Washington Connection and Third World Fascism); "almost everyone is pleased by the changes being wrought," New York Times columnist C.L. Sulzberger commented (4/8/66).

Suharto quickly transformed Indonesia into an "investors' paradise," only slightly qualified by the steep bribery charge for entry. Investors flocked in to exploit the timber, mineral and oil resources, as well as the cheap, repressed labor, often in joint ventures with Suharto family members and cronies. Investor enthusiasm for this favorable climate of investment was expressed in political support and even in public advertisements; e.g., the full page ad in the New York Times (9/24/92) by Chevron and Texaco entitled "Indonesia: A Model for Economic Development."

The U.S. support and investment did not slacken when Suharto's army invaded and occupied East Timor in 1975, which resulted in an estimated 200,000 deaths in a population of only 700,000. Combined with the 500,001,000,000+ slaughtered within Indonesia in 1965-66, the double genocide would seem to put Suharto in at least the same class of mass murderer as Pol Pot.

**Good and Bad Genocidists**
But Suharto's killings of 1965-66 were what Noam Chomsky and I, in The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism, called "constructive terror," with results viewed as favorable to Western interests. His mass killings in East Timor were "benign terror," carried out by a valued client and therefore tolerable. Pol Pot's were "nefarious terror," done by an enemy, therefore appalling and to be severely condemned. Pol Pot's victims were "worthy," Suharto's "unworthy."

This politicized classification system was unfailingly employed by the media in the period of Suharto's decline and fall (1997-98). When Pol Pot died in April 1998, the media were unstinting in condemnation, calling him "wicked," "loathsome" and
"monumentally evil" (Chicago Tribune, 4/18/98), a "lethal mass killer" and "war criminal" (LA. Times, 4/17/98), "blood-soaked" and an "egregious mass murderer" (Washington Post, 4/17/98, 4/18/98). His rule was repeatedly described as a "reign of terror" and he was guilty of "genocide." Although he inherited a devastated country with starvation rampant, all excess deaths during his rule were attributed to him, and he was evaluated on the basis of those deaths.

Although Suharto's regime was responsible for a comparable number of deaths in Indonesia, along with more than a quarter of the population of East Timor, the word "genocide" is virtually never used in mainstream accounts of his rule.

A Nexis search of major papers for the first half of 1998 turned up no news articles and only a handful of letters and opinion pieces that used the term in connection with Suharto.

Earlier, in a rare case where the word came up in a discussion of East Timor (New York Times, 2/15/81), reporter Henry Kamm referred to it as "hyperbole-accusations of 'genocide' rather than mass deaths from cruel warfare and the starvation that accompanies it on this historically food short island." No such "hyperbole" was applied to the long-useful Suharto; one looks in vain for editorial descriptions of him as "blood-soaked" or a "murderer."

In the months of his exit, he was referred to as Indonesia's "soft-spoken, enigmatic president" (USA Today, 5/15/98), a "profoundly spiritual man" (New York Times, 5/17/98), a "reforming autocrat" (New York Times, 5/22/98). His motives were benign: "It was not simply personal ambition that led Mr. Suharto to clamp down so hard for so long; it was a fear, shared by many in this country of 210 million people, of chaos" (New York Times, 6/2/98); he "failed to comprehend the intensity of his people's discontent" (New York Times, 5/21/98); otherwise he undoubtedly would have stepped down earlier. He was sometimes described as "authoritarian," occasionally as a "dictator," but never as a mass murderer. Suharto's mass killings were referred to-if at all-in a brief and antiseptic paragraph.

It is interesting to see how the same reporters move between Pol Pot and Suharto, indignant at the former's killings, somehow unconcerned by the killings of the good genocidist. Seth Mydans, the New York Times principal reporter on the two leaders during the past two years, called Pol Pot (4/19/98) "one of the century's great mass killers . . . who drove Cambodia to ruin, causing the deaths of more than a million people," and who "launched one of the world's most terrifying attempts at utopia." (4/13/98) But in reference to Suharto, this same Mydans said (4/8/98) that "more than 500,000 Indonesians are estimated to have died in a purge of leftists in 1965, the year Mr. Suharto came to power." Note that Suharto is not even the killer, let alone a "great mass killer," and this "purge"- not "murder" or "slaughter"-was not "terrifying," and was not attributed to any particular agent.

The use of the passive voice is common in dealing with Suharto's victims: They "died" instead of being killed ("the violence left a reported 500,000 people dead"—New York Times, 1/15/98), or "were killed" without reference to the author of the killings (e.g., Washington Post, 2/23/98, 5/26/98). In referring to East Timor, Mydans (New York Times, 7/28/96) spoke of protectors shouting grievances about "the suppression of opposition in East Timor and Irian Jaya." Is "suppression of opposition" the proper description of an invasion and occupation that eliminated 200,000 out of 700,000 people?

The good and bad genocidists are handled differently in other ways. For Suharto, the numbers killed always tend to the 500,000 official Indonesian estimate or below, although independent estimates run from 700,000 to well over a million. For Pol Pot, the media numbers usually range from 1 million-2 million, although the best estimates of numbers executed run from 100,000-400,000, with excess deaths from all causes (including residual effects of the prior devastation) ranging upward from 750,000 (Michael Vickery, Cambodia; Herman and Chomsky, Manufacturing Consent).

Pol Pot's killings are always attributed to him personally-the New York Times' Philip Shenon (4/18/98) refers to him as "the man responsible for the deaths of more than a million Cambodians." Although some analysts of the Khmer Rouge have claimed that the suffering of Cambodia under the intense U.S. bombing made them vengeful, and although the conditions they inherited were disastrous, for the media nothing mitigates Pol Pot's responsibility. The only "context" allowed explaining his killing is his "crazed Maoist inspiration" (New York Times, 4/19/98), his Marxist ideological training in France and his desire to create a "utopia of equality." (Boston Globe editorial, 4/17/98).

With Suharto, by contrast, not only is he not responsible for the mass killings, there was a mitigating circumstance: namely, a failed leftist or Communist coup, or "leftist onslaught" (New York Times, 6/17/79), which "touched off a wave of violence" (New York Times, 8/7/96). In the New York Times' historical summary (5/21/98): "General Suharto routs Communist forces who killed six senior generals in an alleged coup attempt. Estimated 500,000 people people killed in backlash against Communists."

This formula is repeated in most mainstream media accounts of the 1965-66 slaughter. Some mention that the "Communist plot" was "alleged," but none try to examine its truth or falsehood. What's interesting is that the six deaths are seen as a plausible catalyst for the Indonesian massacres, while the 450,000 killed and maimed in the U.S. bombing of Cambodia (the Washington Post's estimate, 4/24/75) are virtually never mentioned in connection with the Khmer Rouge's violence. By suggesting a provocation, and using words like "backlash" and "touching off a wave of violence," the media justify and diffuse responsibility for the good genocide.
The good genocidist is also repeatedly allowed credit for having encouraged economic growth, which provides the regular offset for his repression and undemocratic rule as well as mass killing. In virtually every article Mydans wrote on Indonesia, the fact that Suharto brought rising incomes is featured, with the mass killings and other negatives relegated to side issues that qualify the good. Joseph Stalin also presided over a remarkable development and growth process, but the mainstream media have never been inclined to overlook his crimes on that basis. Only constructive terror deserves such contextualization.

A New York Times editorial declared (4/10/98): "Time cannot erase the criminal responsibility of Pol Pot, whose murderous rule of Cambodia in the late 1970s brought death to about a million people, or one out of seven Cambodians. Trying him before an international tribunal would advance justice, promote healing in Cambodia and give pause to any fanatic tempted to follow his example."

But for the New York Times and its media cohorts, Suharto's killings in East Timor-and the huge slaughter of 1965-66- are not crimes and do not call for retribution or any kind of justice to the victims. Reporter David Sanger (New York Times, 3/8/98) differentiated Suharto from Iraq's Saddam Hussein, saying that "Mr. Suharto is not hoarding anthrax or threatening to invade Australia." The fact that he killed 500,000+ at home and killed another 200,000 in an invasion of East Timor has disappeared from view. This was constructive and benign terror carried out by a good genocidist.

Edward S. Herman, professor emeritus at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, is the author of several books, including Demonstration Elections (with Frank Brodhead) and Manufacturing Consent (with Noam Chomsky).
dengue often means death. It is a disease of globalisation the mosquitoes domesticated as the camps grew and as the sweatshop workers migrated from rural areas, having been impoverished largely by World Bank programmes that promote export cash crops over self-sustaining agriculture.

I could just squeeze along a passageway. It was filled with people's clothes, hanging in plastic, like the backroom of a dry cleaner's. The cleanliness and neatness of people's lives is astonishing. They live in cell-like rooms, mostly without windows or ventilation, in which eating and sleeping are tuned to the ruthless rhythm of shiftwork in the factories. During the monsoon season, the canals rise and flood, and more plastic materialises to protect possessions: a precious tape player, posters of the Spice Girls and Che Guevara. I almost tipped over a frying pan of sizzling tofu. There are open paraffin fires and children darting perilously close. I watched a family of five perched on a patch of green, gazing at the sunset through a polluted yellow haze tiny bats circled overhead in the distance were the skeletal silhouettes of unfinished skyscrapers. It was an apocalyptic glimpse of a "globalised" world that Blair and Bush say is irreversible.

Ten miles from the camps, along the toll road owned b Suharto's daughter (he distributed the national power grid among his children banks and vast tracts of forest were tossed to generals and other cronies), lies downtown Jakarta. This is the approved face of the global "model pupil". Here you can find McDonald's with sugar-plump children on Ronald's knee, and shopping malls with Versace leather coats at $2,000 and a showroom of Jaguar cars. One of the smartest hotels is the Shangri-la. There are four wedding receptions here every Sunday night. Last December, attended one that cost $120,000. It was held in the grand ballroom, which is a version of the ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria in New York, complete with chandeliers and gold-leaf arches.

The guests wore Armani, Versace and real diamonds, and dropped cheques in a large box. There was an eight-tier cake with the initials of the couple embossed in icing and the holiday snaps of them on a world tour were projected cinema-size. The guests included former cronies of the deposed Suharto and the chief representative of the World Bank in Indonesia, Mark Baird, a New Zealander, who looked troubled when I asked him if he was enjoying himself.

The World Bank says its mission in Indonesia is "poverty reduction" and "reaching out to the poor". The Bank set up the $86 million loan that built the Shangri-la, which, shortly after the wedding attended by Baird, sacked most of its workers when they went on strike for decent pay.

The Gotham City skyline of downtown Jakarta is mostly banks, many of them empty, and unfinished buildings. Before 1997, there were more banks here than in any city on earth, but half of them have gone bust since the "dynamic" economy collapsed beneath the weight of its corruption. During Suharto's 30-year dictatorship, a cataract of "global" capital poured into Indonesia. The World Bank lavished more than $30 billion. Some of this went to worthwhile programmes, such as literacy, billions went elsewhere - $630 million was spent on a notorious "transmigration" programme that allowed Suharto to colonise the archipelago. Migrants from all over Indonesia were sent to occupied East Timor, where they controlled the economy. The recent blood-letting in Kalimantan (Borneo) was directed against Madura islanders who had been shipped in to "develop" the territory. In August 1997, an internal World Bank report, written in Jakarta, confirmed arguably the greatest scandal in the history of "development" - that "at least 20 to 30%" of the bank's loans "are diverted through informal payments to GOI [Government of Indonesia] staff and politicians".

Seldom a month would pass when Suharto was not being congratulated by western politicians for bringing "stability" to the world's fourth most populous nation. British politicians were especially appreciative, beginning with Harold Wilson's foreign secretary, Michael Stewart, who in 1966 lauded the dictator's "sensible economic policies". Margaret Thatcher called Suharto "one of our very best and most valuable friends". John Major's foreign secretary, Douglas Hurd, championed the Suharto regime's "Asian values" (the unctuous code for lack of democracy and abuse of human rights). In 1997, Robin Cook's first trip abroad included Indonesia, where he shook hands warmly with Suharto - so warmly that a colour photograph of the pair of them was chosen, bizarrely, to illustrate the Foreign Office's report on human rights in the world.

They all knew, of course. Amnesty filled cabinets with evidence of Suharto's grisly record. Milosevic and Saddam Hussein were wimps by comparison. Shortly before Cook flew in, an exhaustive investigation by the foreign affairs committee of the Australian parliament concluded that Suharto's troops had caused the deaths of "at least" 200,000 East Timorese, a third of the population. In New Labour's first year in office, Britain was the biggest weapons supplier to Indonesia.
This made sense - the arms trade is one of globalisation's great successes an Indonesia, the model pupil, has played a vital role. When the "global economy" (ie, unfettered capitalism) took hold in Britain in the early 80s, Margaret Thatcher set about dismantling much of Britain's manufacturing, while restoring the country's arms industry to a world leader, second only to the US. This was done with veiled subsidies, of the kind that underwrite and rig the "free market" in the west. Almost half of all research and development funds went on "defence" and the export credit guarantee department (ECGD) of the Department of Trade and Industry offered "soft loans" to third world regimes shopping for hi-tech sabres to rattle. That many had appalling human rights records and internal conflicts and/or were on the verge of war with a neighbour (India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel) was not a barrier. Indonesia was a major recipient of these virtual giveaways. During one 12-month period, almost pounds 1 billion of ECGD money financed the sale of Hawk fighter-bombers to Indonesia. The British taxpayer paid up the arms industry reaped its profits. The Hawks were used to bomb villages in the mountains of East Timor - and the Foreign Office lied about for years, until Cook was forced to admit it. Since then, the Hawks have bombed the West Papuans as they have struggled to free themselves.

I drove into the Krawang region of Java, where I met a rice farmer calle Sarkom. It is fair to describe Sarkom as representative of the 80% of humanity whose livelihoods depend on agriculture. He is not among the poorest, he lives with his wife and three daughters in a small, bamboo-walled house and there are tiles on the floor. At the front, under the eave, is a bamboo bed, a chair and a table where his wife, Cucuk, supplements their income with sewing. Last year, the International Monetary Fund offered the post-Suharto government a "rescue package" of multi-million-dollar loans. The conditions included the elimination of tariffs on staple foods. "Trade in all qualities of rice has been opened to general importers and exporters," decreed the IMF's letter of intent. Fertilisers and pesticides also lost their 70% subsidy. This means that farmers such as Sarkom are likely to go bankrupt and their children forced to find work in the cities. Moreover, it gives the green light to the giant US foodgrains corporations to move into Indonesia.

The double standard embodied in these conditions is breathtaking. Agribusiness in the west, especially in the US and Europe, has been able to produce its infamous surpluses and develop its export power only because of high tariff walls and massive domestic subsidies. The result has been the soaring power of the west over humanity's staples. The chief executive of the Cargill Corporation, which dominates the world trade in foodgrains, once boasted, "When we get up from the breakfast table each morning, much of what we have eaten - cereals, bread, coffee, sugar and so on - has passed through the hands of my company." Cargill's goal is to double in size every five to seven years. This is known as "free trade". "I went to prison for 14 years so that this would not happen," said Sarkom. "All my friends, those who were not killed, went to prison so that the power of big money would not take us over. I don't care what they call it now - global this or that. It's the same force, the same threat to our lives."

That remark refers to a chapter in Indonesia's recent past that western politicians and businessmen would prefer to forget, although they have been among the chief beneficiaries. Sarkom was one of tens of thousands imprisoned when General Suharto seized power in Indonesia in 1965-66 - the "year of living dangerously" - depising the nationalist president Sukarno, who had led Indonesia since the end of Dutch colonial rule. Scholars now estimate that as many as a million people died in a pogrom that was directed primarily at Indonesia's communist party, the PKI. Sarkom was 19 when he was taken away. He is trying to write down in an exercise book his memories of the horrors he experienced. He was for many years on Buru island, where thousands were dumped, at first without housing, food and water. On the day I went to see him, he had gathered a group of friends for me to meet, men in their 60s and 70s, who had also been tapols - political prisoners released since the fall of Suharto in 1998. Two were teachers, one a civil servant, another a member of parliament. One man was imprisoned because he refused to vote for Suharto's front party, Golkar. Several were PKI members. Adon Sutrisna, a teacher, told me, "We are the people, the nation, that the world forgot. If you know the truth about what happened in Indonesia, you can understand clearly where the world is being led today." A few miles from Sarkom's farm is a hump of earth overgrown with mustard flowers. It is a mass grave, but it has no markings - 35 years after the murders, the families of the victims, believed to be a dozen, are still too frightened to place a headstone. However, in the post-Suharto era, many Indonesians are slowly overcoming th fear that has blighted a generation throughout the countryside, families have begun to excavate the remains of their loved ones. They are furtive figures of the night, occasionally glimpsed on the rim of a paddy or a riverbank. The older witnesses recall rivers "jammed with bodies like logs" in village after village, young men were slaughtered for no reason, their murder marked by rows of severed penises.

I have a friend in Jakarta whose name is Roy. Others call him Daniel. These are just two of many aliases that have helped keep him alive since 1965. He is one of a group of remarkable revolutionaries who went underground during the long years of Suharto's repression - the years when the World Bank was tutoring its "model pupil" - emerging at critical moments to lead spears of a clandestine opposition movement. On several occasions, this led to his arrest and torture. "I survived because they never knew it was me," he said. "Once, a torturer yelled at me, 'Tell us where Daniel is!' " In 1998, he helped bring on to the streets the students whose courageous confrontations with troops usin British-supplied anti-riot vehicles played a critical role in finally bringing down the dictator.

Roy took me back to his primary school where, for him, the nightmare of Suharto's rule began. As we sat in an empty
classroom, he recalled the day in October 1965 when he watched a gang burst in, drag the headmaster into the playground, and beat him to death. "He was a wonderful man: gentle and kind," Roy said. "He would sing to the class, and read to me. He was the person that I, as a boy, looked up to... I can hear his screams now, but for a long time, years in fact, all I could remember was running from the classroom, and running and running through the streets, not stopping. When they found me that evening, I was dumbstruck. For a whole year I couldn't speak."

The headmaster was suspected of being a communist, and his murder that day was typical of the systematic executions of teachers, students, civil servants, peasant farmers. "In terms of the numbers killed," reported the Central Intelligence Agency, "the massacres rank as one of the worst mass murders of the 20th century." The historian Gabriel Kolko wrote that "the 'final solution' to the communist problem in Indonesia ranks as a crime of the same type as the Nazis perpetrated". According to the Asia specialist Peter Dale Scott, western politicians, diplomats, journalists and scholars, some with prominent western intelligence connections, propagated the myth that Suharto and the military had saved the nation's honour from an attempted coup by the Indonesian communist party, the PKI. Until then, Sukarno had relied on the communists as a counterweight to the army. When six army generals were murdered on September 30, 1965, Suharto blamed the PKI. Since the dictator's fall in 1998, witnesses have spoken for the first time and documents have come to light strongly suggesting that Suharto, who had military control of Jakarta, opportunistically exploited an internecine struggle within the army in order to seize power.

What is also no longer in doubt is the collaboration of western governments and the subsequent role of western big business. Indeed, globalisation in Asia was conceived in this bloodbath. For Britain, the goal at the time was to protect its post-colonial interests in Malaysia, then threatened by "confrontation" with an "unstable" Sukarno - a 1964 Foreign Office file called for the "defence" of western interests in Southeast Asia, "a major producer of essential commodities. The region produces nearly 85% of the world's natural rubber, over 45% of the tin, 65% of the copra and 23% of the chromium ore." Of Indonesia, Richard Nixon wrote, "With its 100 million people and its 300-mile arc of islands containing the region's richest hoard of natural resources, Indonesia is the greatest prize in Southeast Asia."

Sukarno was a populist as well as a nationalist, the founder of modern Indonesia and of the nonaligned movement of developing countries, which he hoped would forge a genuine "third way" between the spheres of the two superpowers. He could be a democrat and a demagogue. He encouraged mass trade unions and peasant's and cultural movements. Between 1959 and 1965, more than 15 million joined political parties or affiliated mass organisations that were encouraged to challenge British and US influence in the region. With three million members, the PKI was the largest communist party in the world outside the Soviet Union and China. According to the Australian historian Harold Crouch, "the PKI had won widespread support not as a revolutionary party but as an organisation defending the interests of the poor within the existing system". It was this popularity, rather than any armed insurgency, that alarmed the Americans. Indonesia, like Vietnam to the north, could "go communist".

In 1990, the American investigative journalist Kathy Kadane revealed the extent of secret US collaboration in the massacres of 1965/66 that toppled Sukarno and brought to power Suharto, who at the time was little known outside western intelligence circles. In a series of interviews with former US officials, she concluded, "They systematically compiled comprehensive lists of communist operatives. As many as 5,000 names were furnished to the Indonesian army, and the Americans later checked off the names of those who had been killed or captured."

In 1966, the US ambassador in Jakarta assured Suharto that the "US is generally sympathetic with and admiring of what the army is doing". The British ambassador, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, reported to the Foreign Office: "I have never concealed from you my belief that a little shooting in Indonesia would be an essential preliminary to effective change." Having already armed and equipped much of the army, Washington secretly supplied Suharto's troops with a field communications network. Flown in at night by US Air Force planes from the Philippines, this was state-of-the-art equipment, whose high frequencies were known to the CIA and the National Security Agency. Not only did this technology allow Suharto's generals to coordinate the killings, it also meant that the highest echelons of the US administration were listening in. Suharto was able to seal off large areas of the country. Archive film of people being herded into trucks and driven away exists but that is all. To my knowledge, the fuzzy photograph published here is the only pictorial record of the actual killings in this Asian holocaust.

It ought to be salutary for journalists these days to heed the important role that western propaganda played then, as it does now. British intelligence manipulated the press so expertly that Norman Reddaway, head of the Foreign Office's Information Research Department (IRD), boasted to Ambassador Gilchrist, in a letter marked "secret and personal", that the spin he and his colleagues had orchestrated - that Sukarno's continued rule would lead to a communist takeover - "went all over the world and back again". He describes an experienced Fleet Street journalist agreeing "to give your angle on events in his article... ie, that this was a kid-glove coup without butchery". Roland Challis, who was the BBC's Southeast Asia correspondent at the time, believes that the cover-up of the massacres was a triumph for western propaganda. "My British sources purported not to know what was going on," he told me, "but they knew what the American plan was. There were bodies being washed up on the lawns of the British consulate in Surabayo, and British warships escorted a ship full of Indonesian troops down the Malacca Straits, so that they could take part in this terrible holocaust. It was only much later that we learned the American embassy was supplying names and ticking them off as they were killed. There was a deal, you see.
In establishing the Suharto regime, the involvement of the IMF and the World Bank was part of it. Sukarno had kicked them out now Suharto would bring them back. That was the deal."

With an ailing Sukarno powerless and Suharto about to appoint himself president, the US press reported the Washington-backed coup not as a great human catastrophe but in terms of the new economic advantages. The military takeover, notwithstanding the massacres, was described by Time magazine as "The West's Best News in Asia". A headline in US News and World Report read: "Indonesia: Hope . . . where there was once none." The renowned New York Times columnist James Reston celebrated "A gleam of light in Asia" and wrote a kid-glove version he had clearly been given. The Australian prime minister, Harold Holt, who was visiting the US, offered a striking example of his sense of humour: "With 500,000 to a million communist sympathisers knocked off," he said, "I think it's safe to assume a reorientation has taken place."

Ralph McGehee, a senior CIA operations officer at the time, whom I first interviewed almost 20 years ago, described the ousting of Sukarno in Indonesia as a "model operation" for the US-run coup that got rid of Salvador Allende in Chile seven years later. "The CIA forged a document purporting to reveal a leftist plot to murder Chilean military leaders," he wrote, "[just like] what happened in Indonesia in 1965." He says the Indonesian massacres were also the model for Operation Phoenix in Vietnam, where US-directed death squads assassinated up to 50,000 people.

In November 1967, following the capture of the "greatest prize", the booty was handed out. The Time-Life Corporation sponsored an extraordinary conference in Geneva which, in the course of a week, designed the corporate takeover of Indonesia. It was attended by the most important businessmen in the world, the likes of David Rockefeller, and all the giants of western capitalism were represented. They included the major oil companies and banks, General Motors, Imperial Chemical Industries, British Leyland, British-American Tobacco, American Express, Siemens, Goodyear, the International Paper Corporation, US Steel. Across the table were Suharto's men, whom Rockefeller called "Indonesia's top economic team". Several were economists trained at the University of California in Berkeley. All sang for their supper, offering the principal selling points of their country and their people: "Abundance of cheap labour . . . a treasure house of resources . . . a captive market." Recently, I asked one of them, Dr Emile Salim, if anyone at the conference had even mentioned that a million people had died in bringing this new business-friendly government to power. "No, that was not on the agenda," he replied. "I didn't know about it till later. Remember, we didn't have television and the telephones were not working well."

The Indonesian economy was carved up, sector by sector, at the conference. In one room, forests in another, minerals. The Freeport Company got a mountain of copper in West Papua (Henry Kissinger is currently on the board). A US/European consortium got West Papua's nickel. The giant Alcoa company got the biggest slice of Indonesia's bauxite. A group of US, Japanese and French got the tropical forests of Sumatra, West Papua and Kalimantan.

A Foreign Investment Law, hurried on to the statutes by Suharto, made this plunder tax-free for at least five years. Real, and secret, control of the Indonesian economy passed to the IMF and the World Bank through the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI), whose principal members were the US, Canada, Europe and Australia. Under Sukarno, Indonesia had few debts. Now the really big loans rolled in, often straight into pockets, as the treasurehouse of resources rolled out. Shortly before the Asian financial crash in 1997, the IGGI godfathers congratulated their favourite mass murderer for having "created a miracle economy."

Full Article with Notes

GHOSTS OF A GENOCIDE:

The CIA, Suharto And Terrorist Culture
- Dennis Small

"Exposing Western hypocrisy - how much more exposed can they be? Which decent human being on Earth harbours any illusions about it? These are people whose histories are spongy with the blood of others. Colonialism, apartheid, slavery, ethnic cleansing, germ warfare, chemical weapons - they virtually invented it all. They have plundered nations, snuffed out civilisations, exterminated entire populations. They stand on the world's stage stark naked but entirely unembarrassed, because they know that they have more money, more food and bigger bombs than anybody else" ("The Cost of Living" by Arundhati Roy, Flamingo, 1999, p144; Roy is also the author of the acclaimed novel "The God of Small Things").

During the period 1965-69, and especially during 1965-66, a series of mass murders took place in Indonesia which led to the institution in power of President Suharto and the opening up of the country to Western capitalism. Possibly more than a million people were slaughtered. In the documentary film on globalisation by John Pilger, "The New
Rules of the World" (2001 - screened on TV1, 10/10/01), there are scenes of some of the relatives of the victims of the massacres secretly exhuming the bones of their loved ones. As Pilger notes, evidence has increasingly come to light of the murderous role that the US and British governments performed both in initiating and in helping perpetrate the killings, and in the creation of the long reign of terror that ensued. The full story amounts to a remarkable and chilling record of capitalist genocide, cover-up, and subsequent foundation of a model which was then widely applied elsewhere in the Third World to eliminate the enemies of the West and ensure future profits. To a quite considerable extent, the new rulers of the world built capitalist success on the Indonesian genocide, and the platform it served for globalising Indonesia and the rest of the planet.

To date, the true story of what really happened is only partially told, only partly visible through a fog of propaganda and deception, and a dearth of information. However, trying to help unravel it, and to disclose it to a wider audience, is to embark on a greatly enlightening journey into the human psyche, into the political economy of capitalism, and into the meaning of the Western tradition of the Enlightenment today - the values of freedom, democracy, justice, truth, and respect for human rights. One comes face to face with the reality and psychology of political ideology, violence and civilised values, and what these mean in relation to the philosophical concept of truth. In such matters, if any conception of "truth" has an inevitable, insoluble element of subjectivism, there is always the question of the actual facts in the most fundamental and reportorial sense: who was killed by whom, where, how and why?

Cutting Up The Cake

General Suharto headed the Army's extermination programme. He gave the formal "clean out" order (Directive No.22/KOTI/1965) and sent special Army contingents to Java to organise the slaughter there. In stark contrast to Pol Pot*, his deeds were openly celebrated in the "free world". To be sure, it is clear that: "The Indonesian military takeover of 1965-66, greeted enthusiastically by Western elites, may be considered a model form of Western-sponsored primary terrorism . . . [and] mass imprisonments, and the imposition of permanent martial law, returned the majority of the population to passivity. An 'open door' was established and foreign investment soared, although the drain imposed by the ruling elite on foreign investors through corruption was very large" ("The Terrorism Industry: The Experts and Institutions that Shape our View of Terror" by Edward Herman & Gerry O'Sullivan, Pantheon Books, 1989, p15). * The late Pol Pot was the leader of the fundamentalist Communist Khmer Rouge government of Cambodia, which carried out an equally savage genocide there, in the 1970s. Ed.

Pilger's film, "The New Rulers of the World" makes this sequence of events very clear. The film reveals how, having cleansed the country of the Communists, Western capital set up shop in Indonesia via a specially arranged conference hosted by Time-Life Corporation in Switzerland in 1967. At this conference, the corporates met with Indonesian government representatives and wrote the rules for foreign control of the Indonesian economy. David Rockefeller and other top businessmen were there. Transnational corporations (TNCs) included ICI, Siemens, British Leyland, Heinz, General Motors, British American Tobacco (BAT), Daimler-Benz, American Express, Chase Manhattan Bank, Warburg & Co., Dunlop, Standard Oil, US Steel, Aluminium Co. of America, International Paper Co., and the Swiss Bank Corp. These were the vultures to pick over the bones of the dead as it were. Indonesia's mineral riches, and especially oil, were a big attraction. Killings were still going on - as they did until some time in 1969. The conference was held in Geneva, in November 1967. However, earlier in August that year, the Stanford [University] Research Institute (SRI) had "brought 170 'senior executives' to Jakarta for a three day parade and look-see. 'The Indonesians have cut out the cancer that was destroying their economy', a SRI executive later reported approvingly" ("The Berkeley Mafia and the Indonesian Massacre" by David Ransom, in Ramparts, October 1970, pp28/9 & 48/9, quote on p47).

In 1966, with most of the bloodbath completed, the US Embassy and an US Agency for International Development (AID)-sponsored "Harvard [University] economist, fresh from writing South Korea's banking regulations", had helped Indonesian administrators write the country's economic plans, later refined and finalised at the 1967 Geneva conference. Selling points at the Geneva conference were: "political stability . . . abundance of cheap labour . . . vast potential market . . . treasurehouse of resources" (ibid.). Later, a development team from Harvard, funded through the Ford Foundation, made sure that everything was running according to what the foreign controllers of Indonesia had prescribed.

As David Ransom (cited above) and others have shown, there had previously been a very extensive and coordinated US educational, cultural and economic input into the Indonesian elite which took power in 1965. By 1954, the National Security Council had "decided that the US would use 'all feasible covert means' as well as overt, including 'the use of armed force if necessary', to prevent the richest parts of Indonesia from falling into Communist hands" ("Confronting the Third World", p174). In particular, Ransom's research drew attention to what he called the "Berkeley Mafia", a clique of Indonesian economists trained at Berkeley, the University of California. These economists had great influence on the military high command in the early 1960s, and rose to be the mandarins of Indonesia's "modernisation" in Suharto's New Order. Incorporated in the comprehensive American programme were the Ford Foundation, Council on Foreign Relations, RAND Corporation, Rockefeller Foundation, and some universities, among
various other bodies. Peter Dale Scott has described this programme and its ramifications in considerable detail (see his 'Exporting Military-Economic Development: America and the Overthrow of Sukarno' in "Ten Years' Military Terror in Indonesia", edited by Malcolm Caldwell, Spokesman Books, 1975, pp209/63). By 1965, some 4,000 officers of the Indonesian armed forces had received military training in the US, while the top staff had been schooled in integrated "military economic" development and given a pro-American political orientation. Writing in 1970, Ransom considered - at that stage of knowledge - and since this politicised aid programme was so pervasive in influence, that "neither the CIA nor the Pentagon needed to play any more than a subordinate role" in the 1965 takeover (Ramparts, October 1970, p45). We now know that this was not true but what is so striking from the research of analysts like Ransom and Scott is the extent and depth of the US policy of subversion, using a whole range of methods to effect the eventual objective.

**International Mass Murder Incorporated**

Along with Marshall Green's appointment in June 1965 as Ambassador to Indonesia during the critical period leading up to the Gestapu affair, had been the arrival earlier in 1964 of a new, activist CIA Chief of Station, "Bernardo Hugh Tovar, a naturalised Colombian who had spent years in the Philippines with the CIA's Edward Lansdale in the early 1950s" ("Ten Years' Military Terror in Indonesia", p243). Lansdale had specialised in unconventional warfare techniques against opponents of the Filipino regime. Later, Tovar, went on to CIA dirty work in Indochina. Thanks to the dedicated digging of researcher Kathy Kadane, we have learnt that the CIA and American Embassy officials in Jakarta passed on the names of Communist organisers and activists to Suharto's death squads (e.g. San Francisco Examiner, 20/5/90; "Year 501", pp131/33). Kadane found that: "The US government played a significant role by supplying the names of thousands of Communist Party leaders to the Indonesian Army, which hunted down the Leftists and killed them, former US diplomats say . . . As many as 5,000 names were furnished to the Indonesian Army, and the Americans later checked off the names of those who had been killed or captured, according to US officials . . . The lists were a detailed who's who of the leadership of the Party of three million members, [foreign service Robert] Martens said" ("Year 501", p131; Examiner, 20/5/90; see also "The Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966", p7).

In an interview with Kadane, Robert Martens, a former member of the US Embassy's political section (and when interviewed, a State Department consultant), acknowledged: "It really was a big help to the Army . . . They probably killed a lot of people, and I probably have a lot of blood on my hands, but that's not all bad. There's a time when you have to strike hard at a decisive moment" (San Francisco Examiner, 20/5/90; also see Washington Post, 21/5/90; Boston Globe, 23/5/90). By 1990, several American newspapers at least were willing to print some hard material contesting the official version of events, although what should have been seen as a sensational and most important story was in fact, as might be expected, little used by the media. The Examiner report (20/5/90) declared that: "Silent for a quarter century, former senior US diplomats and CIA officers described in lengthy interviews how they aided Indonesian President Suharto, then Army leader, in his attack on the PKI". Ex-diplomat and political section chief, Edward Masters, who had been Martens' boss, confirmed that "CIA agents contributed in drawing up the death lists" (ibid.). Joseph Lazarsky, who was the deputy CIA station chief in Jakarta when Suharto took over, has admitted that the list of names was used as a "shooting list" by the Indonesian Army. All this, of course, was denied in 1990 by a CIA spokesman.

"Kadane reports that top US Embassy officials acknowledged in interviews that they had approved of the release of the names" ("Year 501", p131). These officials included Ambassador Marshall Green, deputy chief of mission Jack Lydman, and Edward Masters. According to Howard Federspiel, the then Indonesia expert for State Department intelligence: 'No one cared as long as they were Communists, that they were being butchered; no one was getting very worked up about it" (ibid, p131). Green has commented that: "I know we had a lot more information [about the PKI] than the Indonesians themselves" (Examiner, 20/5/90). Likewise, Masters said that the Indonesian intelligence was "not as comprehensive as the American lists". Martens supplied the American-compiled lists to an Indonesian emissary over a number of months. This emissary was an aide to Indonesian minister Adam Malik who in turn passed them on to Suharto's headquarters. Lazarsky disclosed that information about who had been captured and killed came back from the Suharto command centre. "By the end of January 1966, Lazarsky said, the checked off names were so numerous the CIA analysts in Washington concluded the PKI leadership had been destroyed" (ibid.). It is important to record here "that in many cases Party members were killed along with their entire families in order to prevent the possibility of retaliation in the future" ("The Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966", p11; also note the Time (17/12/65) report cited earlier).

Direct US complicity in the mass murders was actually already known from "cable traffic between the US Embassy in Jakarta and the State Department" ("Year 501", pp123 & 132; & "Confronting the Third World", pp177/83). For instance, Secretary of State Dean Rusk had instructed Ambassador Green on October 29 1965, that the "campaign against PKI" must continue and would receive US military aid to do so ("Confronting the Third World", p181). US cable exchanges showed a high level of concern about whether or not the army would have the resolve to carry out the genocide. On October 14 1965 Green had cabled Washington that: "Their success or failure is going to determine
our own in Indonesia for some time to come" (ibid, p180). Later, on November 4, 1965, Green told Rusk that Embassy staff had made it clear that the Embassy and the US government were "generally sympathetic with and admiring of what Army doing"; and a few days later reported that the Army was acting "ruthlessly" carrying out "wholesale killings" (ibid, p181). Green ensured "carefully placed assistance which will help Army cope with PKI", to facilitate what the CIA called the "destruction" of the Party (ibid.). It needs to be noted that relevant US documents for the three months preceding September 30 1965 have been withheld from public scrutiny. As Kolko observes, given all the other material available, "one can only assume that the release of these papers would embarrass the US government" (ibid, p177). As Kolko suggests, too, the Suharto takeover could have already been planned for such an opportune moment.

On Bali an estimated 80,000 people, or roughly 5% of the population, were killed. "The populations of whole villages were executed, the victims either shot with automatic weapons or hacked to death with knives and machetes. Some of the killers were said to have drunk the blood of their victims or to have gloated over the numbers of people they had put to death" ("The Dark Side of Paradise: Political Violence in Bali" by Geoffrey Robinson, Cornell University Press, 1995, p1). In chapter 11 of his profound, in-depth study on Bali, Robinson goes into some detail as to extent and nature of US involvement in the massacres. His overall assessment is that: "Even if it is not possible to establish definitively the extent of US complicity, it can be demonstrated that US policy contributed substantially to the seizure of power by the military under Suharto and to the massacre that ensued" (ibid, p282). As he emphasises, at least as early as 1957, US policy initiatives had been deliberately exploiting and encouraging "internal political cleavages in Indonesia with the intention of bringing down the established government" (ibid). On Bali, it was the arrival of the military with death lists and logistical support that mobilised the slaughter on a large scale. There was an orchestrated propaganda campaign to both instigate and legitimate the killings of those defined as the enemy. The Western-created myth of exotic Bali as a marvellously peaceful island so appropriate as a tourist Mecca masks a violent tradition, and Bali's part in the 1965-66 genocide was actually not quite the aberration it might seem.

Like Kolko, Robinson has analysed and reproduced key aspects of US documentation relating to the opportunity presented by the Gestapu affair. "Just days after the coup, the CIA in Jakarta telegraphed to the White House: 'The Army must act quickly if it is to exploit its opportunity to move against the PKI': CIA Report no.14 to the White House, 5/10/65" (ibid, p283). US officials were then well aware that the Army was inciting popular violence against the PKI, and the strategies of murder which were being employed. Despite its delight, the Johnson Administration still "put on a public show of tolerant noninterference in Indonesia's 'internal affairs'"(ibid, p284). In addition to such observations, Robinson draws attention to several matters connected with Indonesian public media during 1965 that are most suggestive of a typical CIA operation aimed at destabilisation of an existing government. For instance, an inflammatory newspaper Api Pancasila mysteriously emerged only days after the coup attempt and later just as suddenly disappeared, having contributed to the creation of an anti-Communist frenzy (ibid, p285).

The Empire Soldiers On

The British connections to all this have emerged in a variety of ways. Most damning have been the revelations from official documents. Whereas the Foreign Office has regularly denied that Britain was involved in the fall of Sukarno, new revelations in the mid/late 1990s showed that British Intelligence agencies and propaganda specialists carried out covert operations to overthrow the regime. Mark Curtis, author of "The Ambiguities of Power: British Foreign Policy since 1945" (Zed Books, 1995), had an excoriating editorial in 1996 in The Ecologist (Vol.26, no.5, September/October, 1996, pp202/04). Titled "Democratic Genocide", it presented his findings "from recently declassified secret Government files". Quotes immediately below in the next three paragraphs are from his editorial unless otherwise indicated.

Curtis states that: "The secret files reveal three crucial aspects of the British role". The first was its intention to get rid of Sukarno. "According to a CIA memorandum of June 1962, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and President John Kennedy 'agreed to liquidate President Sukarno, depending on the situation and the available opportunities'. In the late 1950s, Britain had aided covert attempts to organise a guerrilla army to overthrow Sukarno". By 1965, the British Ambassador to Indonesia, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, was telling the Foreign Office that: "I have never concealed from you my belief that a little shooting in Indonesia would be an essential preliminary to effective change" (see also "The New Rulers of the World"). Gilchrist went on in October 1965, after the Gestapu affair, to strongly press the generals to take ruthless action against the Communists. Meantime, the US Embassy had declared: "Now is the ideal time in some ways for the Army to be committed to a struggle to the death with the PKI".

The second way that Curtis identifies that Britain undermined Sukarno in the 1960s was through specific covert operations, including carefully targeted propaganda like stories about China's supposed links with the Indonesian Communist Party leader. Another action had more sinister implications. Indonesia had been in confrontation with Britain over the federation of Malaysia. Gilchrist suggested that word be passed on to the Indonesian generals that British forces would "not attack them whilst they are chasing the PKI. The C-in-C [British military commander in Singapore] thinks that this has some merit and might ensure that the Army is not detracted [sic] from what we
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An insight into the meaning of free trade in such creatively innovative situations is highlighted by a memo written by the then Labour Foreign Secretary, Michael Stewart, to Prime Minister Harold Wilson during the genocide: "It is only the economic chaos of Indonesia which prevents that country from offering great potential opportunities to British exporters. If there is nothing to be done with a deal in Indonesia, as I hope one day there may be, I think we ought to take an active part and try and secure a slice of the cake ourselves”. So already, while the slaughter was in process, British strategists were planning an Indonesia designed to fit their business requirements. As we have seen, these plans took fruition at the conference held in Switzerland in 1967 courtesy of Time-Life Corp. when Time and Co. followed up their celebration of the massacres with practical facilitation of the economic gains - at a party where they cut up the cake with the Indonesian clients who had carried out their dirty work ("The New Rulers of the World"). Professor Jeffrey Winters of Northwestern University has pointed out that the imposition by Western capital of such a comprehensive package on a country at a one-off event appears so far to have been unique to Indonesia (ibid.). Perhaps Afghanistan is the next candidate? After all, while Afghanistan itself is resource poor it is very strategically placed for access to the oil and gas reserves of Central Asia. The US has ambitions for a gas pipeline from Central Asia running through Afghanistan (see e.g., NZ Listener, 13/10/01, p23).

More of the evidence of Britain's involvement in the Indonesian genocide has been published in Paul Lashmar and James Oliver's book, "Britain's Secret Propaganda War 1948-1997" (Sutton Publishers, 1998). In late 1965, Britain sent a senior Foreign Office official and propaganda specialist to assist on the spot with the anti-Sukarno campaign. Foreign service operative, Norman Reddaway, was given 100,000 pounds by Foreign Office head, Joe (later Lord) Garner, to manipulate the media and told to do anything he could to get rid of Sukarno. Reddaway has said that the removal of Sukarno was considered a huge success, with Indonesia becoming one of Britain's biggest customers for arms. British operations included coordinated activity by Foreign Office personnel, MI6 (Britain's external Intelligence agency), and Army psychological warfare officers to spread anti-Sukarno propaganda. Reddaway's unit aided pro-Western elements in the Indonesian military. As well as actions based in Singapore, and directly on the ground in Indonesia, Britain's Government Communications Head Quarters (GCHQ) eavesdropping agency listened in to the Sukarno government's communications and passed on relevant information to his military opponents.

Celebration, Cover-up And A Murky History

Although Western agencies were trying hard to cover up their role in the 1965-66 takeover, celebration of Suharto's success was garishly open and callous. Time (15/7/66) called the massacres the "West's best news for years in Asia", displaying a picture of Suharto on the cover bearing the legend, "Vengeance with a Smile" ("The New Rulers of the World"); "Year 501: The Conquest Continues" by Noam Chomsky, Verso, 1993, p128). Its propaganda message was perverted enough to portray Suharto as having an "almost innocent face", while describing the new Army regime as "scrupulously constitutional" ("Year 501", p128). US News & World Report enthused over an Indonesia where there was now hope, and the New York Times (19/6/66) saw "A Gleam of Light in Asia" ("Year 501", p128; "The New Rulers of the World"). The general thrust of the American media message was that anti-Communist forces had risen up to take back the country, although the NYT's leading political writer, James Reston, did slyly suggest a deeper US role in the whole episode (19/6/66; "Year 501", p128). This could surely be guessed at given the very revealing US response. At a much less visible level, from the Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, to the Ambassador to Indonesia, Marshall Green, American leaders expressed great satisfaction with the results that had been achieved. By 1968, however, when the CIA published its disinformation book on the Suharto takeover - "Indonesia-1965: The Coup That Backfired" - the US propaganda strategy was to further play down the role of the Indonesian Army, and to picture the massacre as a spontaneous, uncontrollable burst of the people's fury at the PKI, resulting in an unfortunately high body count.

A brilliant chapter in Noam Chomsky's "Year 501" (chapter 5, "Human Rights: The Pragmatic Criterion", pp119/37) dissects in typically scathing fashion the covert Western, especially American, encouragement and support for the massacres. What is so evident from his well documented account is the utterly cynical ruthlessness of the US leadership when dealing with those that it defines as its enemies, whether active or potential. Only mobilised public outcry, in America and around the world, can serve as any constraint on such activity. The leading CIA and RAND Corp. policy analyst on Indonesia, Guy Pauker, saw things explicitly in terms of what the Nazis did to the Communists in Germany, and thus what the Indonesian Army should do to the PKI. Even some years before 1965, Pauker had been advocating to the Indonesian military the need to take action and wipe out the Communist opposition. He and
others had continued to do so, and in 1969 after the massacres were virtually completed, Pauker reflected with satisfaction that the 1965 coup attempt "elicited the ruthlessness that I had not anticipated a year earlier and resulted in the death of large numbers of Communist cadres" (ibid, p122).

Much mystery has been associated with the actual coup attempt on September 30, 1965. In this attempted coup, six of seven top military officers were murdered. Soon after, media fabrications about how these men were treated before being killed were to play a big part "in stirring up popular resentment against the PKI. Photographs of the bodies of the dead generals - badly decomposed [after being dumped in a well] - were featured in all the newspapers and on television. Stories accompanying the pictures falsely claimed that the generals had been castrated and their eyes gouged out by Communists" ("Deadly Deceits", pp57/8). The September 30/1 October coup is known as the "Gestapu" affair, with the attempt itself being crushed by the commander of the Army's strategic command, Major-General Suharto, within fewer than 24 hours ("The Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966", p45). Aspects about the coup attempt have led to speculation about the possible role of an agent provocateur (or provocateurs). Was it in fact part of a more comprehensive CIA/Suharto plot? Peter Dale Scott has evidently made the strongest case, based on detailed analytical research, that even the coup attempt was probably manipulated from the inside by Suharto and the CIA (Pacific Affairs, volume 58, no.2, Summer 1985).

But the swift labelling of the Gestapu affair as a botched Communist grab for power has generally prevailed ever since, becoming a standard item of mainstream historical writing. Whatever the exact truth here, it is fascinating to see how the spurious Suharto/CIA version of history has regularly got reproduced, and in the most respected histories. For example, eminent (and very conservative) Oxford University historian, John Roberts, has had this to say: "Food shortages and inflation led to an attempted coup by the Communists (or so the military said), and in 1965, the Army stood back ostentatiously while popular massacre removed the Communists to whom Sukarno might have turned. He himself was duly set aside the following year and a solidly anti-Communist regime took power" ("Shorter Illustrated History of the World", BCA, 1994, p547). So while Roberts does signal a doubt about the nature of the coup, he goes on, incredibly enough, to: (1) promote the blatant and easily demonstrable lie that the military had nothing to do with the genocide; (2) actually give the massacre a positive tone in the sense that it was purportedly "popular"; and, (3) then give the new regime a similarly positive tone in that it was "solidly" founded. All this can justly be called the crudest propaganda. Even Roberts' expressed reservation about the coup seems tailored as well to help transmit the idea of a considered, judicious judgement. Such then is the best tradition of Western history-making on matters of this sort; and the fate of some one million people, brutally butchered, is cavalierly consigned to the dustbin of capitalist history.

One of the problems in investigating the 1965-69 genocide is the lack of reliable documentary evidence of the more specific details of what happened. Most of the killings during the peak period - from October 1965 through to March 1966 - were dispersed in action, and done at night in the countryside by small bands. "The New Rulers of the World" claimed to show the only extant photograph of any of the killings. Unlike the case with the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, the Indonesian official and unofficial records are very scanty. This seems to have been deliberate policy to a large degree so as to not only prevent scrutiny at the time, but also obfuscate any future efforts to establish the truth, or, worst of all, accountability. However, we do now know crucial elements of the American and British connections to the murders.

**The Empire Soldiers On**

The British connections to all this have emerged in a variety of ways. Most damning have been the revelations from official documents. Whereas the Foreign Office has regularly denied that Britain was involved in the fall of Sukarno, new revelations in the mid/late 1990s showed that British Intelligence agencies and propaganda specialists carried out covert operations to overthrow the regime. Mark Curtis, author of "The Ambiguities of Power: British Foreign Policy since 1945" (Zed Books, 1995), had an excoriating editorial in 1996 in The Ecologist (Vol.26, no.5, September/October, 1996, pp202/04). Titled "Democratic Genocide", it presented his findings "from recently declassified secret Government files". Quotes immediately below in the next three paragraphs are from his editorial unless otherwise indicated.

Curtis states that: "The secret files reveal three crucial aspects of the British role". The first was its intention to get rid of Sukarno. "According to a CIA memorandum of June 1962, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and President John Kennedy 'agreed to liquidate President Sukarno, depending on the situation and the available opportunities'. In the late 1950s, Britain had aided covert attempts to organise a guerrilla army to overthrow Sukarno". By 1965, the British Ambassador to Indonesia, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, was telling the Foreign Office that: "I have never concealed from you my belief that a little shooting in Indonesia would be an essential preliminary to effective change" (see also "The New Rulers of the World"). Gilchrist went on in October 1965, after the Gestapu affair, to strongly press the generals to take ruthless action against the Communists. Meantime, the US Embassy had declared: "Now is the ideal time in some ways for the Army to be committed to a struggle to the death with the PKI".

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The Disinformation Game
An article in the Guardian (1/8/01), titled "Our Bloody Coup in Indonesia: Britain colluded in one of the worst massacres of the century" by Isabel Hilton, has indicated that a 1966 study carried out at Cornell University "discovered that what most of the officers [in the Gestapu Affair] had in common was not any association with the PKI, but a connection with General Suharto". As Hilton says "there is also evidence that the British and US responsibility for the fall of Sukarno goes back to the event that triggered it - an alleged Leftwing coup attempt in 1965". Lt. Col. Untung, the supposed leader of the officers involved, was a known anti-Communist and some of his colleagues had been trained in the US. "It has been known for more than ten years that the CIA supplied lists of names for Suharto's assassination squads. What is less widely known is that the supposed pro-Communist coup that triggered the crisis was almost certainly the work of the CIA" (ibid.). Hilton points out "that the British and American governments did not just cover up the massacre: they had a direct hand in bringing it about"; and, furthermore, they succeeded "in selling a false version of events that persists to this day". An intriguing aspect of the "Gestapu" affair is its very name. The term was allegedly coined as an acronym by an Indonesian army officer, "presumably with the intention of investing it with the aura of evil associated with the term 'Gestapo'" ("The Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966", p46). Although the word would surely mean little in this sense to the average Indonesian, it would certainly have a suitably sinister ring in the Western media.

Roland Challis, the BBC correspondent, "has described how British diplomats planted misleading stories in British newspapers at the time" (Guardian, 1/8/01). Conservative media like the Atlantic Monthly systematically whitewashed the genocide. The Atlantic Monthly assured its readers that Suharto "is regarded by Indonesians who know him well as incorruptible . . . In attacking the Communists, he was not acting as a Western puppet; he was doing simply what he believed to be best for Indonesia" (Guardian, 1/8/01). This just happened to include "the granting of lucrative concessions to Western mining and oil companies", along with such bonuses as the buying of British military aircraft (ibid).

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